

# ANALYSIS OF MENSTRUAL HYGIENE PRACTICES IN NEPAL

The Role of WASH in Schools  
Programme for Girls Education 2016

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# ABOUT THIS REPORT

The Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) in Schools (WinS) programme in Nepal is part of a global initiative of UNICEF; its development partners including: Department of Water Supply and Sewerage, Department of Local Infrastructure Development and Agricultural Roads, Department of Education, Nepal Red Cross Society, International Development Enterprises, Federation of Drinking Water and Sanitation Users Nepal and Nepal Fertility Care Center; and its development donors including: the Government of Finland, Department for International Development (DFID) and UNICEF National Committees. UNICEF Nepal has supported the implementation of WinS programme systematically since 2000 through the School Sanitation and Hygiene Education programme (SSHE).

In 2006, UNICEF Nepal developed the school-led total sanitation approach which contributed to school and community sanitation. This approach has been replicated and implemented in many countries in Asia and Africa. The programme aims to provide a safe and healthy environment in schools so that all students can fully benefit from their education experience. The WinS is based on a child-rights approach that recognizes all children have the right to have access to safe drinking water, basic sanitation facilities, hand washing facilities (with soap) and are provided with the knowledge and skills that promote lifelong health and safe hygiene practices. The programme is based on a body of evidence demonstrating the health and educational benefits for children of hygiene promotion, adequate sanitation and safe water in schools. By providing access to adequate WASH facilities and training on hygiene practices, including menstrual hygiene management (MHM), WinS aims to reduce hygiene-related diseases, increase student attendance and learning achievements, contribute to gender equality and to the fostering of social inclusion and individual self-respect. Offering an alternative to the stigma and marginalization associated with menstruation, the programme seeks to empower all students and encourages the full participation of girls and female teachers in the education system, which in turn increases

their learning and achievement opportunities and promotes gender equality. By providing accurate information, advice and support and with the introduction of practical and effective methods this should create a conducive environment for effectively managing menstruation at school, which in turn could significantly contribute to challenging prevailing negative social practices and customs girls and women continue to encounter.

Globally, according to the 2016 mid-year global census<sup>1</sup> 44.7 per cent of the world's female population is aged between 15-44 years old. In Nepal, according to the 2011 National Household Census, this percentage is slightly higher at 47.79 per cent<sup>2</sup> of its national population. Most of these women and girls will menstruate regularly each month for between two – seven days. Menstruation is a natural part of the reproductive cycle. However, in many parts of the world and Nepal, it remains taboo, stigmatized, 'hidden' and rarely discussed. In worse case scenarios prevailing negative cultural practices that surround menstruation impact negatively on the lives, the health and safety of women and girls and reinforce gender inequalities and exclusion. As a result menstruation for many girls and women is not understood or managed effectively, which can have a negative effect on a girl's well-being including her school attendance and learning opportunities. In Nepal the practice of *chhaupadi*, seclusion, continues, although it has been outlawed by the Nepal Supreme Court since 2005. This practice, which has recently has received global media attention, is slowly being challenged by girls, families and communities. However these practices are slowly being challenged, addressed and changed and the school setting is an ideal intervention setting for providing information and the impetus for change opportunities.

1 World Midyear Population by Age and Sex for 2016, <https://www.census.gov/population/international/data/idb/world-pop.php>

2 National Population and Housing Census 2011, Central Bureau of Statistics, Kathmandu, Nepal.

UNICEF's Adolescent Development and Participation (ADAP) Baseline Study (2014) reported that 'restrictions relating to notions of pollution associated with menstruation for girls have wide-ranging implications in Nepal, particularly in the mid and far-western districts'. The report found that 44 per cent of girls in the far and mid-western regions of Nepal were regularly asked to observe *chhaupadi*<sup>3</sup>. While this study found the prevalence of *chhaupadi* and other cultural norms and traditions relating to menstruation were high, the report's questionnaires did not ask specifically about school attendance during menstruation. 'Avoid school' was self-reported by a very small number of girls in the category of 'Other'. Because there was no specific question or multiple choice option response relating to schooling, attendance and menstruation, further exploration was necessary to fully understand the impact of menstruation on a girl's school attendance and the potential impact of WASH in School (WinS) programme interventions.

At a practical level, in order to manage menstruation hygienically, women and girls must have access to water and sanitation and convenient disposal/cleaning facilities. They require somewhere private and safe to change their sanitary cloths, pads and clothes; clean water and soap for washing their hands and the used cloths; and facilities for safely disposing of used materials or a place to dry them if reusable. UNICEF recognises this requirement and has focussed part of its WASH Nepal programming

to deal with this often overlooked issue in schools. Working with development partners, the relevant Government of Nepal departments, local communities and NGOs and INGOs the WASH in Schools (WinS) programme aims to ensure the provision of safe, clean, private and hygienic facilities in schools should reduce interruptions to girl's education attendance and in turn enable their education opportunities.

UNICEF has a clear mandate and focus on women and girls' empowerment, thus further investigation into the role and effectiveness of MHM interventions are imperative. The effects of the programmes on the well-being and empowerment of girls, tackling gender equality issues and access to resources and raising health standards as well as measuring traditional educational indicators such as attendance is extremely relevant.

This report, Analysis of Menstrual Hygiene Practices in Nepal: The Role of WASH in Schools Programme for Girls Education 2016, was commissioned by UNICEF Nepal in collaboration with the Health Research and Social Development Forum (HERD) to explore the socio-cultural practices related to menstruation, its management and consequences pertaining to girls' education. The research, analysis and this report, examines menstrual hygiene practices and management in government schools in three rural districts in Nepal, the role and effectiveness of WASH and WinS programmes in schools and the impact this programme may have had on girls' education, including attendance.

3 UNICEF and Population Council, *Adolescent Development and Participation (ADAP) – Baseline Report*, Nepal, November 2014, p. 42.



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# ACRONYMS

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CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
DEO	District Education Office
D-WASH-CC	District WASH Coordination Committee
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GI	Group Interview
HDI	Human Development Index
HERD	Health Research and Social Development Forum
MHM	Menstrual Hygiene Management
NHRC	Nepal Health Research Council
PTA	Parent/teacher Associations
SI	Structured Interview
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SSDP	School Sector Development Plan
SSI	Semi Structured Interview
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WinS	WASH in Schools

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) for school girls has long been a neglected issue in low income countries however there is increasing recognition that it should be included in research, programming, education and health policies. Women and girls continue to face many challenges due to their gender and school attending girls often struggle to manage their menstruation hygiene in schools. Research has shown that many girls experience shame, fear, confusion, teasing and lack of accurate information, advice and support with regards to their menstruation. This results in many girls being unable to confidently and effectively manage their menstruation due to these factors, as well as prevailing negative socio-cultural restrictions and practical and logistical reasons including; shortage of soap and water, sanitary products, sanitation and waste disposal facilities in school environments<sup>4</sup>. These barriers in turn can impact girls' learning and education opportunities and undermines gender equality and empowerment. The school setting is an ideal intervention setting for providing information and the impetus for change opportunities and the cultural and structural elements of this issue are increasingly being recognised internationally, nationally and locally; and institutions, providers and relevant stakeholders are beginning to address these barriers.

This study was commissioned by UNICEF Nepal in 2016 to better understand the scope of challenges faced in rural Nepal and explore how Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) in schools (WinS) programmes in Nepal may contribute to addressing the challenges of menstrual management in schools. The study examined three questions:

1. How does menstruation affect attendance of girls and what is the role of WASH facilities in affecting attendance?
2. What are the WASH facilities in schools and how do these meet girls' needs?

4 Sommer, M., et al., A Time for Global Action: Addressing Girls' Menstrual Hygiene Management Needs in Schools. *PLoS Med* 13.2 (2016): e1001962.

3. How does menstruation affect girls' ability to fully participate in school and community life?

The WASH-in-Schools (WinS) programme provides safe drinking water, improves sanitation facilities and promotes good health outcomes. The main aim of WinS programme is all children go to school and all schools provide a safe, healthy and comfortable environment where children can grow, learn and thrive. In Nepal, UNICEF is supporting government and civil society to implement WASH in schools. The 2016 School Sector Development Plan (SSDP) aims: '... for all schools to have functional water and sanitation facilities that are environmentally sound and user-friendly for children, boys and girls and differently-abled students and teachers. To strengthen participation and learning outcomes, minimizing the drop-out rate of adolescent girls by fulfilling their privacy and menstrual hygiene management related needs'<sup>5</sup>. Current access to toilet facilities in government schools is 81.3 per cent; separate toilets for girls are found in 67.6 per cent of the schools; and adequate drinking water facilities are available in 79.7 per cent of the schools. In 2016, UNICEF Nepal supported 977 schools with water, sanitation and hygiene facilities including construction support programmes and with training and sensitization programmes.

The Government of Nepal has given the WASH programme in schools (WinS) a high priority. The Government is also developing the WASH programme for their school guidelines, in order to minimize duplication while ensuring that standards and uniformity for the programme are promoted.

This study, Analysis of Menstrual Hygiene Practices in Nepal: The Role of WASH in Schools Programme for Girls Education 2016, employed a mixed-methods approach to collect data with: the students - girls (600) and boys (180), teachers (6), head teachers (12) and mothers (6) from twelve schools in the Achham, Bajura and Parsa

5 Government of Nepal (GoN), School Sector Development Plan 2016-2023, Ministry of Education (MoE), Kathmandu, October 2016, p.x.

districts of Nepal. The larger schools in these districts were purposively sampled and used for the study, in order to meet an agreed sample size. Equal numbers of WinS schools (six) and non-WinS schools (six) were sampled in each of the three districts. The girl students (600) were also asked to maintain a self-complete diary to record their school attendance during their menstrual periods. A questionnaire was used to collect data on the girl's attendance from the schools and observational checklist of the school's facilities was used. The study received ethical approval from the Nepal Health Research Council (NHRC).

### Significant findings:

- All the girls in the study, from all the districts and schools – both WinS and non-WinS, continued to have many questions about menstruation, especially the physical aspects; including: 'Why does it happen?' Although many of the girls had attended classes, often the SRH classes did not provide this information – teachers instructed the girls to self-study and the mixed gender classes were problematic. The MHM classes focused on cleanliness to prevent diseases rather than were responsive to the girls' questions and concerns. The girls' mothers were often a main source of information, but they often had inadequate information themselves or concentrated on the social and cultural expectations and restrictions the girls were expected to observe.
- Although 57 per cent of the girls from WinS schools and 48 per cent of the girls in non-WinS school described menstruation as a 'normal healthy process', many of the girls did not know the cause or reason for their menstruation - including 76 per cent of the girls in the Parsa district.
- As a result menarche (first menstruation) was a frightening and confusing experience for most girls. They worried about what was happening to them physically, how to effectively manage their menstruation physically, about the accompanying teasing and/or source of embarrassment and how to observe the cultural restrictions (rules).
- Girls were expected to observe a number of restrictions and customs, including *chhaupadi*, which despite being outlawed, 17 percent of

the girls in Bajura and 60 per cent in Achham districts reported observing some form of seclusion.

- Menstruation continues to be regarded as a 'dirty polluting process' and limited the girl's ability to fully participate in school and community life including:

### At school:

- Toilets were often not clean or private so most girls did not change their products or use the toilets at school; girls that left school in order to go home to change usually remained at home and did not return to school that day;
- Less than half of the girls, 45 per cent, felt uncomfortable sitting near the front of the classroom when they had their periods;
- Girls - 15 per cent in WinS schools and 21 per cent in non-WinS schools, reported they would never raise their hand to answer questions and 32 per cent of girls in WinS and 43 per cent in non-WinS schools would never write on the board when menstruating;
- Half the girls reported that it was difficult to concentrate on their classes due to discomfort, pain and fear of leakage;
- The majority of girls in both types schools and in all districts reported not feeling comfortable playing sports and were uncomfortable being in classes with boys.

### At home in the community:

- Few girls would worship – fearing divine retribution for themselves or their families;
- Cooking and food preparation restrictions and the types of food permitted;
- The practise of *chhaupadi*; including the girl's movements around the village were restricted – in order not to offend, due to their increased vulnerability – from violence including rape and attacks from wild animals, including snakes, for the girls' safety and cultural taboos, including worship, people they may encounter including other males and holy men and or affecting crops and livestock;
- Fear of leakage in school and at home leading to embarrassment and gossip was still a concern;

- o Difficulties were reported when disposing of and/or cleaning sanitary products as girls feared others seeing their menstrual blood, would have resort to burying, burning or disposing of their products away from their homes.

The research found that typically at the onset of menarche, the first occurrence of menstruation, most girls missed up to a week of school in all the three study districts: Achham, Bajura and Parsa. After a girl's first period however, the number of school days missed because of their menstruation dropped significantly. The main reasons the girls gave for missing school during their menstruation was due to pain, discomfort and leakage.

The research found that WinS programme made significant and positive contributions for the girls in the Bajura district where gender segregated toilets had been built and maintained, there was a good and constant water supply and reusable sanitary pads were introduced. These girls had less fear of leakage, which was the second most common reason given for school absence. The research found that more girls in the Parsa district missed school due to their menstruation than in other districts, despite all the study districts having similar patterns of menstrual cloth utilization.

Schools were and are an important source of information about menstruation for both girls and boys. Not all the schools in the study had a full time female staff member or teacher. Girls admitted feeling shy, embarrassed and uncomfortable about asking for information, sanitary supplies or medicine from a male teacher. Girls felt especially shy/embarrassed/uncomfortable about their periods around other students, especially boys – and worried about being teased. Girls preferred that health classes with information relating to menstruation were taught in a girls-only class – so they could openly discuss questions and concerns they may have. In WinS schools, mothers were the other main source of information, although the information they provided tended to focus on the expected behaviour and the cultural traditions/restrictions the girls were expected to observe. In non-Wins schools other female friends were the main source of information. In extended households, especially those that were multi-generational, the cultural and traditional restrictions were more likely to be enforced including *chhaupadi* (segregation customs), although many of these restrictions were slowly changing or not as strictly enforced. For example instead of sleeping outside in a separate

hut, menstruating girls would now sleep in a different bed or location within the house if that was possible. Restrictions around food preparation, restricted food and activities, disposal of soiled sanitary products, washing and worship though still prevailed in some form in all the districts to varying degrees.

While girls appreciated infrastructure improvements made to the schools, including single sex toilets; it is important that they are accessible, maintained and sustained so that girls can rely on having these facilities. The research found that at times toilets were unavailable to the students due to lack of water, not being cleaned or maintained. The concerted efforts to address menstrual restrictions by schools and communities were appreciated and practices were slowly changing. Girls told us that the main reasons they observed many of the restrictions was because of their families and only a few restrictions were followed because girls feared divine retribution. This indicates the need to intervene with older family members and the opportunity for generational change.

More support is required for the teachers and schools. This would enable them to provide accurate information about materials, symptoms and causes of menstruation in an understandable manner and a review of what age (class) the SRH and MHM classes are conducted is also required. Currently the classes are between classes 6-9 but it is crucial that the classes are conducted before the onset of menarche, thus the classes may need to be introduced at an upper primary level to ensure coverage. Segregated teaching of sexual and reproductive health by gender (teachers and students) would be beneficial, allowing girls to feel more comfortable to ask questions and explore issues. Age appropriate teaching of menstrual management is recommended and schools could explore collaborating with local health facilities where nurses could help teach menstrual management related classes to girls.

Schools need to ensure that they can maintain the facilities – ensuring that there is an adequate water supply, supplies are replaced – including soap, the toilets are maintained, cleaned regularly and are accessible. The toilets also need to provide adequate privacy and should be gender separated. The schools need to ensure that their supplies of sanitary items, including pain medications are checked and re-stocked and that there is a clear policy understood by the students, teachers, schools and parents and wider community.

# INTRODUCTION

Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) for school girls has long been a neglected issue in low income countries however there is increasing recognition that it should be included in research, programming, education and health policies<sup>6</sup>. Nepal's 2016 School Sector Development Plan (SSDP)<sup>7</sup> included recognition of this issue and stated as part of its mission statement:

'...for all schools to have functional water and sanitation facilities that are environmentally sound and user-friendly for children, boys and girls and differently-abled students and teachers. To strengthen participation and learning outcomes, minimizing the drop-out rate of adolescent girls by fulfilling their privacy and menstrual hygiene management related needs.'

Limited access to water, sanitation and hygiene facilities contribute to the difficulties faced by the girls to hygienically and confidently take care of themselves during their menstruation at school. Girls have often been unable to access adequate sanitary materials because of financial and/or supply issues in rural areas<sup>8</sup>. Prevailing negative cultural practices, including *chhaupadi* (seclusion) and other social restrictions also affect girls' ability to equally and fully participate in family, community life and school. Many girls continue not to have access to nor receive accurate and pragmatic information about menstrual hygiene management.

The school environment provides an excellent intervention site to enable adolescent boys and girls to negotiate the physical and psychosocial changes that happen during puberty; and provide

accurate information. Yet, there is evidence that girls find it even more difficult to attend and participate in school when they are menstruating, particularly if the school does not meet their water, sanitation and hygiene needs<sup>9,10</sup>.

In Nepal, cultural interpretations of menstruation persist. The idea that menstruation is 'polluting' mean that many women and girls face significant challenges while they are menstruating<sup>11,12,13</sup>. Previously conducted national research<sup>14</sup> suggests that school attendance is affected by menstrual taboos, although this may vary by district<sup>15</sup>. The school context also affects the attendance of girl students. If school facilities do not allow for comfortable management of menstruation, through absence of gender segregated facilities, lack of privacy, inadequate water supply or disposal systems, girls are more likely to miss school<sup>16</sup>. Although the Government of Nepal has made some progress to provide better water and sanitation facilities, 18.4 per cent of schools in Nepal do not have a toilet<sup>17</sup>.

The Government of Nepal is taking steps to improve access to clean water supplies in

6 Mason, L. et al., *Adolescent schoolgirls' experiences of menstrual cups and pads in rural western Kenya: a qualitative study*, *Waterlines* 34.1, 2015, pp. 15-30.  
7 Government of Nepal, *School Sector Development Plan 2016-2013*, 2016, p. x.  
8 Mahon, T. and M. Fernandes, *Menstrual hygiene in South Asia: a neglected issue for WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) programmes*. *Gender and Development* 18 (1), 2010, pp. 99-115.

9 Tegegne, T.K. and M.M. Sisay, *Menstrual hygiene management and school absenteeism among female adolescent students in Northeast Ethiopia*. *BMC Public Health* (14), 2014, 14: p. 1118.  
10 Sommer, M., et al., *A comparison of the menstruation and education experiences of girls in Tanzania, Ghana, Cambodia and Ethiopia*. *Compare* 45(4), 2015, pp. 589-609.  
11 Crawford, M., L.M. Menger and M.R. Kaufman, *This is a natural process: managing menstrual stigma in Nepal*. *Cult Health Sex* 16(4), 2014, pp. 426-39.  
12 Ranabhat, C., et al., *Chhaupadi Culture and Reproductive Health of Women in Nepal*. *Asia Pac J Public Health* 27 (7), 2015, pp. 785-95.  
13 Hamal, M. and S. K.C., *Hygiene, Health Problems and Socio-cultural practices: what school girls do during menstruation?* *International Journal of Health Sciences and Research* 4 (4), 2014.  
14 Oster, Emily, and Rebecca Thornton, *Menstruation, sanitary products and school attendance: Evidence from a randomized evaluation*. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 3.1, 2011, pp. 91-100; [http://sticerd.lse.ac.uk/seminarpapers/dg10052010\\_1.pdf](http://sticerd.lse.ac.uk/seminarpapers/dg10052010_1.pdf).  
15 Ibid pp. 91-100.  
16 Birdthistle, Isolde, et al., *What impact does the provision of separate toilets for girls at schools have on their primary and secondary school enrolment, attendance and completion? A systematic review of the evidence*. *Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education University of London* 6, 2011.  
17 Ministry of Education, *Consolidated Flash Report 2015/16*, Kathmandu, Ministry of Education, Government of Nepal.

communities and in schools as part of their 'Child Friendly Schools Initiative'<sup>18</sup>, which was launched in 2002 and is supported by UNICEF. This initiative outlines nine aspects of quality education, which include access to child-gender-disabled friendly water and sanitation.

UNICEF, in coordination with the WASH thematic working group, approved by the Ministry of Education (MoE) in 2010, has been supporting investment for WASH programmes in schools through the education system. This includes improving physical WASH infrastructure, training teachers on basic hygiene skills and menstrual hygiene management, working within the curriculum, providing teacher training and creating a conducive learning environment and supportive national policy<sup>19</sup>.

This study on Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) in schools was commissioned by UNICEF in 2016 to better understand the scope of challenges still faced by school attending

girls in rural Nepal. The study explored how existing WinS programmes have contributed to addressing adequate water and washing facilities, appropriate disposal facilities and privacy in girls' toilets. The study also researched levels of basic awareness on menstrual hygiene and practical skills information for effective menstrual management; including how to make and use reusable sanitary pads. The findings discuss the ongoing challenges of menstrual hygiene management faced by the girls in schools in three rural districts; Achham, Bajura and Parsa. Specifically, the mixed-methods study sought to answer three questions:

1. How does menstruation affect attendance of girls and what is the role of WASH facilities in affecting attendance?
2. What are the WASH facilities in schools and how do these meet girls' needs?
3. How does menstruation affect girls' ability to fully participate in school and community life?

18 UNICEF, *Child Friendly Schools Manual*. 2009, New York: UNICEF.

19 UNICEF, ROSA, *WASH for School Children. Provisional Draft, State of Art in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka*

# METHODS

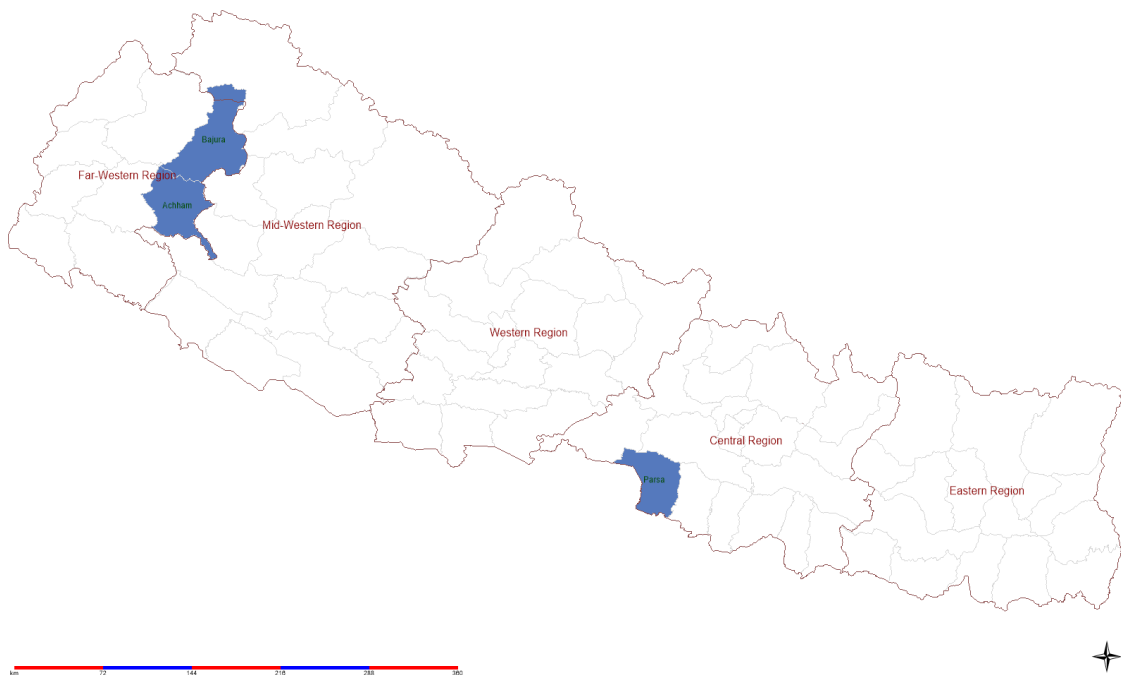
## Setting

The research data was collected in 2016 from twelve government schools in three rural districts: Achham, Bajura and Parsa, where currently UNICEF has implemented WinS programme in some of the districts' government schools. A brief description of the study districts:

1. The Achham district is located in far western Nepal and is covers an area of 1,680 km<sup>2</sup>. The district has a population of approximately 257,477 with 34,204 adolescent girls, between the ages 10 to 19 years. The district has the lowest literacy levels of the three districts used in the study, for both males - 46 per cent and females 37 per cent. The district has a national (Nepal) Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.378, placing the district 71 out of 75 on the HDI scale in Nepal<sup>20,21</sup>. Achham is predominantly rural with

an agricultural based economy and is almost exclusively a Hindu district, with 68 per cent of the population being Brahmin/Chhetri ethnicity and 26 per cent Dalit<sup>22</sup>.

2. The Bajura district is also located in far western Nepal with an area covering 2,188 km<sup>2</sup> and population of 134,912. There are 16,768 adolescent girls, aged between 10 to 19 years old. The literacy rates in this district are 43 per cent for women and 69 per cent for men. The Bajura district is the least developed district in Nepal with the lowest HDI of 0.364<sup>23,24</sup>. The majority of the district's population is Hindu; Brahmin/Chhetri ethnicity 71 per cent, Dalit 23 per cent and the remaining from the Thakuri and Sanyasi<sup>25</sup> castes.
3. The Parsa district is located in central Nepal, with an area of 1,353 km<sup>2</sup> and has the largest population of the study areas of 601,017.



Map 1: Map of the research districts in Nepal

20 Central Bureau of Statistics, *Population Monograph of Nepal. 2014*: National Planning Commission, Government of Nepal.  
 21 Nepal Human Development Report: *Beyond Geography, Unlocking Human Potential*. National Planning Commission, Government of Nepal and United Nations Development Programme, Nepal (2014).

22 Central Bureau of Statistics, *National Population and Housing Census 2011*. 2012, Kathmandu: National Planning Commission, Central Bureau of Statistics, Government of Nepal.  
 23 Central Bureau of Statistics, *Population Monograph of Nepal. 2014*  
 24 Nepal Human Development Report: *Beyond Geography, Unlocking Human Potential*.  
 25 Central Bureau of Statistics, *National Population and Housing Census 2011*. 2012.



There are 61,998 adolescent girls aged between 10 to 19 years old in the district and the literacy rates found here are similar to the Bajura district: with female literacy at 44 per cent and men's 67 per cent. Parsa is ranked 42 out of 75 amongst districts in Nepal with a HDI of 0.464. The majority of the districts' population is Hindu, 83 per cent; Madhesi 41 per cent; Janajati 16 per cent; Dalit 14 per cent and Brahmin/Chhetri 10 per cent. The second largest religious group is Muslim at 14 per cent<sup>26</sup>.

## Sampling and Data Collection

A mixed-methods approach was used in this study over a period of four months, from May until August 2016. This method includes a variety of methods to collect both quantitative and qualitative data and was chosen in order to collect a vast array of information in a variety of settings. In twelve schools purposive sampling was conducted. This included six schools with incorporating WASH programmes in their school programmes and six schools without any WASH in their school programme from all three districts; Achham, Bajura and Parsa – see *Table 1*.

For the school selection, UNICEF regional teams paired matched schools that have and have not received the WinS programme, in terms of their WASH infrastructure. Criteria included sex segregated toilets, availability of a changing room, medicine, sanitary pads and products being available during menstruation, safe water supply and existence of a hand washing station. Large schools, with class size range of 114 to 571 students in classes 7, 8, 9 and 10 were purposively sampled to meet sample size requirements.

## Quantitative Methods and Sampling

### Structured Interviews with girls

A total of 600 girls, 200 girls per district, were participated in the study. This sample size was chosen to allow a comparison of this study with another study in the Chitwan district, Nepal which included 198 girls from grades seven and eight<sup>27</sup> conducted November 2006 - January 2008.

The field researchers, all experienced, female and recruited in Kathmandu, explained the purpose of the study and how it would be conducted and distributed parental consent forms to all eligible interested girls in grades 7 - 10 who had begun their menstruation. The girls were from the classes seven, eight, nine and ten and the average age of the participants was 15 years old. All the girls who had obtained parental consent and were interested in participating in the study wrote their names on separate pieces of paper, which were mixed up and drawn at random by the research team, using a lottery sampling selection method. In all the sampled schools, fifty structured interviews were conducted with menstruating girls. Data was collected on Samsung tablets using the Open Data Kit software program.

These fifty randomly selected girls from grades seven, eight, nine and ten of each school were also each given a personal diary to record when they menstruate for the two months prior to the study. On the days that girls menstruated, field researchers asked them to record whether they missed part or a full day of school and the reason(s) why they missed school during those days. The research team gave the girls a list of reasons to choose from for missing school including: school holiday, pain, tiredness, lack of adequate WASH facilities or waste disposal sanitary pads/cloths, fear of leakage, fear or presence of teasing, temple in the school or on the way to school or 'other'. The field researchers demonstrated to the girls and their teachers how to correctly fill in their diaries. Unfortunately, after the first month of beginning the study, there was a national school holiday which lasted approximately one month and schools were closed. Teachers were asked to brief the girls on continuation of diary maintenance for a further one month after the holiday when they returned to school. If girls had given their phone numbers to the research team, they were contacted and briefed about how to continue to record their menstruation experiences. However, some recording problems arose as the diaries did not contain extra pages in order for the girls to record information systematically. In order to compensate for this the field researchers asked the girls to make notes on a blank sheets of paper, recording when they menstruated, if they were absent from school and the reasons for this absence. After the data collection period, researchers called the participants and arranged for the pick up the

26 Ibid.

27 Oster, Emily, and Rebecca Thornton, *Menstruation, sanitary products and school attendance: Evidence from a randomized evaluation*, pp. 91-100.

diaries and additional notes from girls at school. If the girls were absent from school, researchers looked for other ways to retrieve the information – including collecting from the participant’s homes or through friends. The diaries were collected by the same researchers who were involved in first phase of data collection. These researchers checked the data from the diaries of 15 randomly selected girls in each school with the school records (a total of 60 diaries from each district). The school records did not record/show if a girl misses part of the school day or left school, however the accuracy of recording of full days of absence were checked and found to be concurrent with the information in the individual diaries. Field researchers collected a total of 479 diaries out of the 600 which were distributed, of which 2 diaries were blank; therefore making the total number of diaries used in the study 477 (refer to *Questionnaire 9* for example of an individual diary).

### Structured Interviews with boys

Data was also collected from adolescent boys from the same schools used for the study. Structured interviews were conducted in order to gain insight into the boys’ knowledge of menstruation, their knowledge of the cultural taboos, restrictions and practices and any additional knowledge or insights into teasing (of the girls) that they may have observed or had participated in. In all 12 schools the lottery method was used to randomly select 15 interested boys from class 9, from a total 180 boys, whose parents had given informed consent to participate in the study. All the boys were individually interviewed by the researchers (*Questionnaire 7*).

### Structured observations of the schools

Structured observations, of all the toilets (*Questionnaire 6*) on every school compound, were conducted. Field researchers observed the main components of the child friendly school initiative in the schools that had been (or not) implemented including: availability of gender separated toilets, disabled friendly toilets, child friendly toilets, child friendly water taps and bins for waste disposal. The researchers also noted if the bathrooms were accessible, private (including if they had a door and/or a lock), clean, had disposal facilities, were safe and regularly maintained.

## Qualitative Methods and Sampling

Of the twelve schools in the sample, two schools - one WinS and one non-WinS school per district were identified by UNICEF as having the greatest number of students in classes 7, 8, 9 and 10. These six schools were used to collect further the qualitative and quantitative data.

### Group interviews with girls

Two menstruating girls per school, who had not participated in structured interviews, were asked to participate in a group interview with a close friend (*Questionnaire 3*). It was hoped that by using this method and having the support of a friend, this would enable the girls to feel more at-ease during the discussion and the research team could gain further insight into their personal experiences of their menstruation management.

### Focus group discussions with girls

In addition, in the six participating schools (two per district – one with a WinS programme, one without), one focus group discussion involving six to eight menstruating girls, who had not been previously sampled for structured interviews or group interviews (*Questionnaire 2*), was conducted to discuss the school and wider community issues with regards to menstrual management. Whenever it was possible, girls from the same class were sampled as they were likely to feel more at ease with one another. To further enhance communication, a game, vignettes (stories) and a body mapping exercise was used. The vignettes presented the story of a girl in different situations/scenarios that study participants would be familiar with. After watching these stories the researchers then initiated a discussion based around the experiences of the girl, how the girl might feel and the reasons for her feelings. This enabled girls to discuss their feelings and experience in a ‘safe’ environment and way, as they were being asked to discuss the feelings of a fictional character. The body mapping exercise involved drawing a picture of a girl and discussing how girls feel while menstruating and attending school. The participants marked on the picture the relevant body part(s) concerned with that feeling or emotion<sup>28</sup>. Sanitary products including pads and

28 Nepal Human Development Report: *Beyond Geography, Unlocking Human Potential*, 2014.

cloths which are used in menstrual management were passed around to stimulate and focus the discussion. A description of girls participating in the qualitative study is detailed in *Table 2*.

### **Interviews with teachers and mothers**

To triangulate information from the girls and collect further data on school and community barriers for confident menstrual management, semi-structured interviews were conducted with two mothers chosen from the study participants in each district, a total of six mothers (*Questionnaire 4*). Six teachers, two from each district; one WinS and one non-WinS, who taught the 'Environment, Health and Population' subject classes were also interviewed (*Questionnaire 1*). Structured interviews with head teachers from all twelve schools were also conducted in order to describe and further understand the implementation of the WinS programme, the continuing the barriers, the positive facilitators and further insights of the implementation of the WinS programme in the schools. An overview of the data collected is given in *Table 3*.

### **Data Collection**

Data was collected by three teams of four female researchers with minimum of a graduate level academic qualification in social sciences or public health. All had prior experience of collecting qualitative and quantitative data in rural areas. The Health Research and Social Development Forum (HERD), based in Kathmandu, provided the research teams five days training on research methods and tools. The teams then were observed during a one-day pilot of the tools in two schools; one with and one without a WinS programme in Parsa district. These two pilot schools were excluded from the actual research study sample.

Topic guides and questionnaires were developed in English, translated into Nepali and then translated back into English to check the quality of translation. Tools were piloted and adapted accordingly. A desk-monitoring unit at the implementing organization - HERD, in Kathmandu, maintained regular contact with researchers throughout data collection.

### **Ethical concerns**

All the participants including students and their parents, teachers and mothers gave informed written consent to participate in the study. The study received ethical approval from the Nepal Health Research Council (NHRC). Data was collected in private and all the participants were anonymised for analysis. The data was stored on password-protected computers and only the research team had access to the data.

### **Data management and analysis**

The quantitative data was collected on tablets and then uploaded to a central server in Kathmandu throughout data collection. Data from the boys' paper questionnaires, head teacher interviews and field diaries were entered into the data management program CSpro v6.0. As the observation checklists were short, the collected data from these was entered in Excel. The data was 'cleaned', manually checked and coded. Consistency and range checks were performed before exporting to SPSS v20 for descriptive analysis. A wealth index was generated using household assets, roof and house construction materials, and type of toilet and main source of water – refer to *Figure 1*. For each household characteristic, participants were scored a point and these points were then added up. If a household scored four or lower they were categorised as having low socio-economic status, if they scored between five to seven they were considered of medium socio-economic status and those scoring eight and above were classified as having a high socio-economic status<sup>29</sup>.

29 UNICEF, ROSA, *Wash for School Children. Provisional Draft, State of Art in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.*

Figure 1: Variables used in the wealth index calculation

Household Assets	Roof construction	House construction	Toilet facility	Water supply
Electricity	Calamine/cement	Brick and cement	Flush to septic tank	Pipe water in compound
Solar	fibre	Stone and cement	Flush to somewhere else	
Radio	Cement dhalan	Cement block	Pit latrine with slab	
Television				
Mobile phone				
Computer				
Livestock				
Bank account				

The qualitative data was collected and transcribed in Nepali by the researchers while they were in the Parsa, Bajura, and Achham districts. The transcripts were then translated from Nepali to English by a team of four translators in Kathmandu, who had prior experience of qualitative data translation. Supervisors compared 30 per cent of translations with the original Nepali transcripts and provided feedback to ensure quality, accuracy and consistency. The qualitative data team conducted a descriptive content analysis using the Nvivo V11 program. The team read the data, made memos and developed an initial coding structure based on the main

issues or categories emerging from the collected data. The team used a process of comparison between and within transcripts to classify the natural structures that occurred in the data. These 'themes' recur or were common in the dataset. Emergent themes were those that helped researchers make sense of the data, those that help elicit broader meaning to the experiences of menstruation for girls and other respondents. This coding structure was applied to a sample of data from each respondent type, before reviewing and then completing coding of all translated transcripts.

# RESULTS

The data is presented by district and the differences between the WinS and non-WinS programme schools. A description of the implementation of the WinS programme in schools is presented as well as the results and characteristics of girls and boys involved the quantitative sample. The findings present data about menarche, cultural traditions, sources of knowledge and information and menstrual management in the home. This information is provided before discussing menstrual hygiene management in schools.

## The WinS Programme

All the head teachers at each school involved in the study were interviewed about the key components of the WinS programme and about their school's programme. While all but one WinS school in Achham had a WASH focal person; none of the WinS schools had a school nurse. There was a nurse in a non-WinS school in the Bajura district. There were parent/teacher associations (PTAs) at all schools except for one non-WinS school in Parsa and almost all of these schools (except for two) had regular monthly PTA meetings. School management committees existed in all the schools except for one non-WinS school in Parsa. The head teachers felt the WinS programme schools had slightly more active

school management committees, refer to *Table A*. Eleven out of the twelve schools had Children's Clubs, apart from a non-WinS school in Parsa. Of these, only half of these schools, those with the children's clubs addressed issues of menstrual management and WASH - three schools were very active in this topic.

Six WinS schools had received support and training on menstrual management with support and funding from local government, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), compared with only two non-WinS schools receiving this additional support. Only one WinS school and two non-WinS schools had conducted training on making re-usable sanitary pads - see *Table 4*. Among the WinS schools; three schools had a changing room for girls, two schools gave painkillers when required to manage pain and two schools had designated waste disposal facilities in the girl's washrooms. Among the non-WinS schools: none of these schools had changing rooms, one school provided painkillers when required and none of the schools had waste disposal facilities for the girls.

Four WinS schools (two in Parsa and two in Achham) had sanitary pads (or equivalent products) available for girls to use on a regular

**Table A - WASH supportive structures in schools**

	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	WinS (2)	N-WinS (2)	WinS (2)	N-WinS (2)	WinS (2)	N-WinS (2)	WinS (6)	N-WinS (6)
WASH focal Person	1	0	2	0	2	0	5	0
Nurse or trained health personnel	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Parent Teachers Association (PTA)	2	2	2	2	2	1	6	5
Regular monthly PTA meetings	2	2	1	2	2	1	5	5
School Management Committee (SMC))	2	2	2	2	2	1	6	5
<b>Activeness of SMC</b>	<b>N=2</b>	<b>N=2</b>	<b>N=2</b>	<b>N=2</b>	<b>N=2</b>	<b>N=1</b>	<b>N=6</b>	<b>N=5</b>
Very active	1	1	1	1	2	0	4	2
Moderately active	1	1	1	1	0	0	2	2

basis and one school located in Achham had sanitary products available for emergencies only (see *Table 5*).

Teachers and head teachers were asked what challenges they faced in implementing the WinS improvements and where or if they had they found support. They said that maintaining the cleanliness of toilets was difficult, particularly where and when there was not enough water. If things broke, such as a water pump or water pipe, they felt there was a lack of accountability or action to repair. Repair and resupplying requires commitment, ownership and supportive leadership. Resource shortages were felt and the teachers and heads identified that there was a need for skilled human resources to supervise the building and regular maintenance of appropriate facilities.

The teachers and heads said it was difficult to make the girls feel comfortable dealing with or talking about menstrual hygiene when female staff were not available. More interactive teaching materials were requested and required for the sexual and reproductive health (SRH) classes and it was important that the girls received the information before the onset of their menarche. This may mean that the classes may have to be taught at younger age/lower class. Although there had been some positive changes to cultural practices and perceptions of menstruation within the wider community, these remained a challenge; the teachers felt that were some slow improvements were beginning to happen in their communities.

### Socio-demographic and socio-economic characteristics of girls and their families

The sample reflected data from the census on the dominant religious and ethnic groups in each district, Parsa was the only district with a Madhesi ethnic group. There were more study participants from Brahman/Chhetri ethnic groups in Bajura 77 per cent in WinS and 79 per cent in non-WinS schools and Achham 69 per cent in WinS and 59 per cent in non-WinS schools. All participants from Achham spoke Nepali as their first language. Doteli was the first language in the Bajura district - 87 per cent in WinS and 96 per cent in non-WinS and Bhojpuri in Parsa 82 per cent in WinS and 100 per cent in non-WinS districts (see *Table 6*).

A small proportion of the population self-defined themselves as having a disability in all three districts; less than 10 per cent from all WinS and non-WinS schools. The mean age of girls was 15 years old. The education level of the girls' mothers was highest in Parsa, but despite this, 67 per cent in WinS and 61 per cent in non-WinS of the mothers had not received any education. The girls' fathers were better educated, particularly in WinS schools in Parsa where 39 per cent had reached class 10 and above. The girls' families from WinS and non-WinS schools had similar socio-economic scores, with 22 per cent in WinS and 26 per cent in non-WinS schools of families being in the lowest wealth quintile and 64 per cent of families in the medium wealth quintile. Girls' families from Bajura and Parsa in non-WinS schools were poorer than those in WinS schools with 34 per cent and 30 per cent being in the poorest wealth quintile. In Achham 29 per cent were in the poorest wealth quintile in WinS schools. Although some homes had suffered some minor damage in the 2015 earthquake, overall the vast majority, 93 per cent, of the houses were not damaged at all (see *Table 6*). The socio-economic and socio-demographic status of boys is presented in *Table 7* and is similar to the girls' households.

### Menarche - practices, knowledge and information

The average age for the onset of menarche was 13 years old in Bajura and Achham, and 12 years in Parsa. The maximum age of menarche, amongst the participants in the study, was 17 years and minimum was 10 years old.

Overall, 24.3 per cent of girls in WinS and 17 per cent in non-WinS schools knew 'something' about menstruation before menarche (refer to *Figure 2*). There was a significant difference between girls knowing *something* about menstruation before onset of their menarche at the WinS schools compared with the non-WinS schools. Pearson's chi-squared test revealed a value of 4.920, 1 degree of freedom and a p value of 0.027, indicating a significant difference - a 95 per cent confidence level. However, it is not possible to attribute this with the start of the WinS programme. If girls knew 'something' about menstruation and care, they usually obtained this information from their mother - particularly in the non-WinS schools or friends - more so in the WinS

schools. Interestingly, 27 per cent of girls reported getting information pre-menarche from teachers in WinS schools, whereas in non-WinS schools only 8 per cent of girls received information from teachers. 57 per cent of girls in WinS schools and 66 per cent of girls in non-WinS schools did not know what the cause of menstruation was before their menarche (see Table 8).

Most girls reported feeling scared, confused and embarrassed when their menstruation started; and many didn't know what was happening to them: "I suddenly saw my menstrual blood for the first time and I got scared," said a girl from a non-Win school in Achham. Some girls tried to hide their menstruation from family and friends. Girls from Bajura and Achham reported being teased

by neighbours and other community members when they started menstruating. One mother from Bajura said "I have told my daughter to walk or sit carefully as neighbours might notice if the blood stains and backbite [gossip] about it." At the onset of their menarche, girls reported some sort of *chhaupadi* (seclusion) practice followed by their family in all three districts, although the seclusion was stricter in the Achham and Bajura districts than in Parsa. One girl from Achham described her first menstruation: "My family told me to stay inside the house. They did not let me touch my brother or anyone else, or even the cattle. They also did not let me go outside. I had to stay alone in the house. On the fourth day of menstruation they gave me nutritious food to eat, they gave

Figure 2: Age of menarche by district

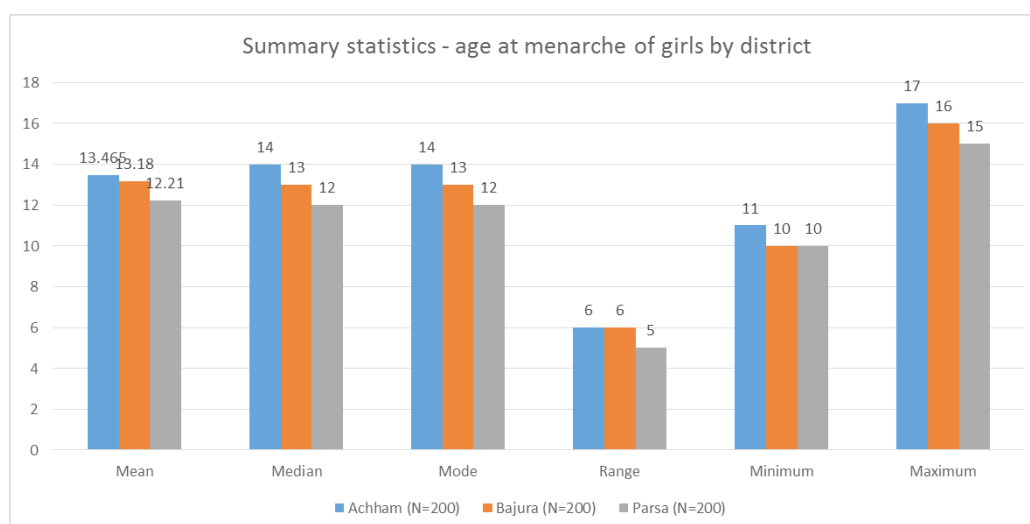


Figure 3: Age of menarche – percent by district

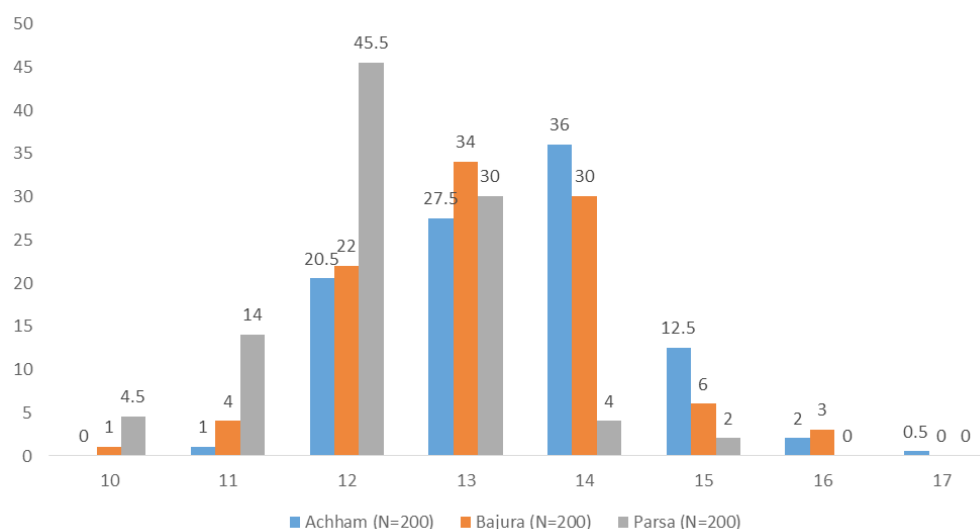
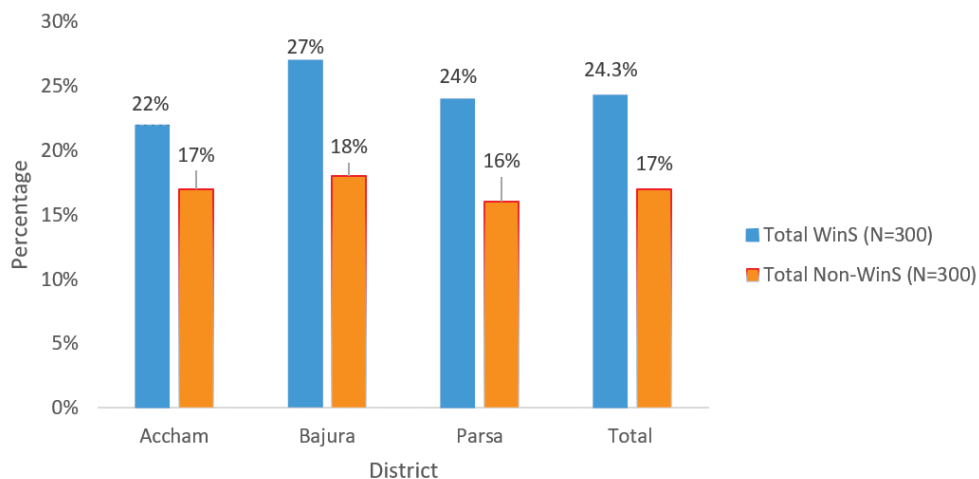


Figure 4: Girls knowing something about menstruation before menarche



me fruits and other foods. They let me enter the main house only after 12 days of menstruation. I had to take early morning baths throughout those 12 days.” The practice of seclusion, especially at the onset of a girl’s first menstruation, was still widely practiced and this custom did not appear to be changing nor were there any reports of girls or families challenging these traditions, although there were some subtle changes on how *chhaupadi* was practiced. For example: the girls might sleep somewhere else in their home, if possible, rather than outside, which was the tradition.

Girls often missed a week of school the first time they menstruated: “At first, menstruating girls are not allowed to come to school for around seven to eight days,” a girl from a WinS school in Bajura informed the team. In all three districts, menarche historically/traditionally signified the time when girls would get married and leave home and some of the teasing was related to this “friends tease asking ‘who will she marry?’” was a common taunt/question according to the girls.

### Cultural Practices and Restrictions

At the onset of menarche, girls tended to be given detailed information on the cultural restrictions that they should, and are expected to, follow and observe while menstruating. These included how they should behave and what they should avoid, as opposed to accurate explanatory information about the physical process of menstruation or practical physical menstrual management. For example: when a researcher asked: ‘What did you know about menstruation apart from

not being allowed to touch plants?’ a common response was: ‘I knew that it was impure blood from the body coming out during menstruation’. Girls were *sometimes* given practical information from their mothers or female relatives about how to use cloths, or how to sit ‘properly’ to avoid staining where they sat. One mother from a Win school in Bajura explained: “I did not teach her anything. The only thing which I taught her was to sit carefully so that the blood does not get stained on the bedding.” Girls reported that they did not actually receive information about why they menstruate, or why menstrual cramps occur and would often ask the researchers for this type of information: ‘*Why do we menstruate?*’ was commonly asked by the girls during the interviews and discussions to the research team.

Girls were further asked about menstrual restrictions during the structured interviews, however the collected qualitative data was not able to inform the development of the questionnaire, as the data was collected concurrently. This meant that not all restrictions were quantified nor all the reasons for the restrictions were quantified. The qualitative data shows that there were multiple restrictions on girls and women and multiple beliefs existed about the reasons for restrictions and their consequences. Girls identified what they felt was the ‘main’ reason, but it is important to note that the response categories were not mutually exclusive (*questionnaire 8*).

Differences were observed between the districts in terms of reasons given for the restrictions and extent of restrictions. The data has been



disaggregated by district, and by WinS schools and non-WinS schools and is shown in Tables 9-14.

### Menstrual seclusion

In Bajura and Achham districts girls discussed the *chhaupadi*<sup>30</sup> tradition of menstrual seclusion. Menstrual seclusion at its strictest, was described by girls and their mothers, being when women were not permitted to live in their home while they were menstruating, they would stay instead outside in designated shed. This seclusion was to contain menstrual pollution, keeping the house pure and prevent angering the gods that were worshipped in the home. If the gods were angered, then it was believed there was the risk of spirit possession of family members or of the menstruating woman, leading to misfortunes or illness for the menstruating woman and/or her family. The majority of girls from both WinS and non-WinS schools - 60 per cent, reported not being able to sleep in the same house as their family and 23 per cent of girls in WinS schools and 11 per cent in non-WinS schools in Bajura were not able to sleep in the same house as their family - see Tables 9, 10, 11 and 12. Only one girl in Parsa reported not being able to sleep in the same house as her family while menstruating. During the interviews and focus groups in Bajura and Achham, girls reported these practices were changing and some reported sleeping in a different part of the house, or a different bed, instead of a shed outside the home: "Earlier, when *chhaupadi* was practiced, menstruating girls were made to stay in a shed or in a separate place out of the house. But now we have found that they are allowed to stay in a room inside their home. Although they stay in a separate room, they are in a safe place," one of the head teachers in a Bajura WinS school explained. One girl from the Bajura district discussed the purifying rituals that still have to take place inside the house after she finishes menstruating: "Say this is our house - like here is the bed. After sleeping in the bed we have to paint the floor of that room (with red mud), wash all the clothes and later, after making it

pure by sprinkling cow's urine we can sleep like normal."

Girls living in extended families in Bajura and Achham had fewer places to seclude girls and women within the house due to space limitations. As well, the presence of elders in the household meant that traditions tended to be more strictly followed and adhered to: "There are more old people living in joint families and they control us more during menstruation [than parents], saying that they had to follow restrictions," one of the girls in Achham attending a WinS school explained. The presence of elders and living in an extended family household meant that customs were more strictly adhered to, for example girls more likely to have to sleep in a shed away and outside the home. Girls reported that if a family was more traditional<sup>31</sup> and/or was of a high social class, they were more likely to maintain stricter restrictions to protect their families' honour and prestige: "If we - the high class family - do not follow restrictions during menstruation, then our prestige will go down," a girl in Achham explained. Girls felt that female family members were stricter in enforcing restrictions than male members. The girls in the Achham and Bajura districts also spoke about the role of the community in ensuring (enforcing) that the traditions were upheld: "I don't have a grandfather or grandmother, but the rest of the people in the village get angry [if I do not obey the restrictions]," said an Achham girl from a non-WinS school.

Menstrual seclusion – *chhaupadi*, in the far west of Nepal has received a lot of attention in recent years from non-governmental organizations and the press<sup>32</sup> and some girls and the health teacher at a WinS school in Achham reported a change in this practice as recently as two years ago: "Nowadays, things are different compared to before. Because of various INGOs and NGOs, the *chhaupadi* tradition has been nearly eliminated and now people allow menstruating women to stay on the ground floor of their house." A girl in Bajura told the team: "[the campaign] has

30 The practice of *chhaupadi*, outlawed by the Supreme Court of Nepal in 2005, dictates what a woman can eat, where she can sleep, with whom she can interact, where she can go, and whom she can touch while she is menstruating. See recent articles: <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2016/apr/01/nepal-bleeding-shame-menstruating-women-banished-cattle-sheds>; and <https://www.statnews.com/2017/02/17/nepal-tradition-chaupadi-menstruation/>

31 Often expressed as '*uneducated*' – but given the low levels of education in most families in these districts in this study this is unlikely to refer to education levels alone.

32 BBC world article here <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b08pnszp>; and <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/video/2017/may/27/girls-challenge-the-stigma-surrounding-periods-in-nepal-video>

made people aware that girls should not be kept separately. It is now alright to go to school [while menstruating]. It also made people aware about it being okay to touch menstruating girls.” However the research team believes that the increased focus on eradicating *chhaupadi* may have made girls feel less comfortable and less able to report or admit to their own experiences with *chhaupadi* practices, therefore data might show an under-representation of the practice.

### Restrictions on physical contact

Girls said that the practice of curtailing contact with male family members was enforced/adhered to in all districts, especially in Bajura and Achham. The qualitative data revealed girls were more specific, saying that they should not touch male family members who wear holy threads. Men wearing sacred threads have been initiated into their caste and *gotra* (ancestral) membership, and the thread signifies lineage membership and is a symbol of spiritual purity. The thread and wearer must not be defiled and the thread should be changed after contact with a menstruating woman<sup>33</sup>. 60 per cent of girls in Achham and 62 per cent of girls in Bajura could/would not touch male family members while menstruating compared to only 16 per cent in Parsa (see Table B). The girls who reported taking care not to touch male family members in both Achham and Bajura said it was because they feared the person

they touched would become unwell: “men get infected.” In Parsa the main reason they would not touch male family members was because their family did not allow them to.

Menstruating girls were also restricted from touching healers - *dhami*, because they were scared of spirit possession and because: “Those people who are *dhami* would fall sick if we touched them [while menstruating],” a girl attending a WinS school in Bajura explained. Healers were closer to the spirit world and therefore girls and their families were particularly vulnerable if these persons were touched. Girls also specifically mentioned not being able to touch young babies who were still breastfeeding - perhaps due to their vulnerability to spirit possession.

### Restrictions in entering the kitchen, cooking and eating

In Achham 96 per cent of girls and 98 per cent of girls in Bajura were unable to enter the kitchen and cook food, compared with 28 per cent of girls in Parsa (see Table B). Girls in Bajura told the team: “If you go into the kitchen to eat some food, then you will be possessed by the gods there, the gods that are placed and worshipped in our house.” Many girls were restricted from preparing or cooking food; 22 per cent of girls in Achham,

Table B. Menstrual restrictions by district

Restrictions	Achham	Bajura	Parsa
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
Cannot visit religious places	200 (100)	198 (99.0)	194 (97.0)
Cannot attend religious occasions	191 (95.5)	172 (86.0)	121 (60.5)
Cannot do household puja	199 (99.5)	198 (99.0)	195 (97.5)
Cannot touch male family members	119 (59.5)	123 (61.5)	32 (16.0)
Cannot cook/enter the kitchen	191 (95.5)	195 (97.5)	55 (27.5)
Cannot go outside as much as normal	58 (29.0)	46 (23.0)	12 (6.0)
Cannot eat any foods or drinks without any restrictions	159 (79.5)	179 (89.5)	94 (47.0)
Cannot sleep in the same house as the rest of the family	120 (60.0)	34 (17.0)	1 (.5)
Cannot sleep in the same bed as others	94 (47.0)	165 (82.5)	11 (5.5)
Cannot lift heavy loads	110 (55.0)	86 (43.0)	109 (54.5)

Note: n=200 in each district.

33 Gellner, David N. "Lynn Bennett, *Dangerous wives and sacred sisters: social and symbolic roles of high-caste women in Nepal*. xiv, 353 pp. New York and Oxford: Columbia University Press, 1989. and *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 54.02, 1991, pp. 397-398.

5 per cent in Bajura and 7 per cent (2) in Parsa, because it was believed they would spoil the food (refer to *Tables 9, 11 and 14*). Other reasons given were fear of divine retribution and family restrictions. In group interviews and focus groups, girls also talked about being restricted from touching cooking utensils, although this practice was also slowly changing.

The girls reported numerous food restrictions as well; 80 per cent of girls in Achham, and 90 per cent of girls in Bajura were prevented from eating certain types of food while menstruating, compared with 47 per cent of girls in Parsa (see *Table B*). Alarming 79.5 per cent of the girls in Achham, 89.5 per cent in Bajura and 47 per cent in Parsa reported that they were not permitted any food or drink of their choice during their menstruation period<sup>34</sup> (see *Table B*). Restricted foods in Bajura and Achham included dairy products. Two girls from WinS schools in Bajura explained: “If we eat yoghurt or milk then the cows and buffalos will become impure and the gods will be furious,” and the “Cows will become impure and produce less and less milk and they will gradually stop producing.” Girls in Parsa reported restricting their sour food intake in order to prevent heavy bleeding, as well as refraining from touching pickles and rice because these will be ruined if a menstruating girl touches them. The quantitative data analysis showed that the main reason for these restrictions was that girls feared having heavy bleeding or becoming unwell if restricted foods were eaten, particularly in Achham and Parsa. In Bajura family restrictions was the more common reason given.

### **Religious restrictions**

Almost all girls in all three districts reported not being able to worship, receive blessings, participate in religious ceremonies or go to the temple while they were menstruating. The main reasons given for this were a fear of divine retribution and their families’ restrictions. More girls in Bajura said the main reason for this restriction was that they feared divine retribution than in other districts. Girls feared infertility, failing their exams, illness, illness of family members and/or spirit possession if they worshipped: “Once I forgot I was menstruating and I worshipped,” a girl in Parsa at a WinS

school recounted, “my mother said –‘do not worship as god will be angry and you will fail your exam!’ I stopped then and my mother scolded me a lot when I returned home.” Girls wanted to be respectful to their family members – this they demonstrated by their following and observing traditions and restrictions.

Girls also reported being kept away from livestock, particularly cows and milk producing animals and kitchen gardens for fear of making them barren or ruining a crop. Girls in Bajura reported not being able to feed cows and buffalos grass that had been cut that same day while they were menstruating. It was believed that this ‘wet’ grass could be polluted by a menstruating girls’ touch and therefore they should only feed dry grass while menstruating.

Girls were also restricted from using the toilet or the common water tap: “We are not allowed to use the toilet. We go to the forest, towards the river,” a girl from Achham non-WinS school explained because the toilet is a building used by the community or family there is the belief/fear that she might pollute it and affect others. It was also risky for girls if they relieved themselves in the open: “It is quite bad if a girl having menstruation defecates and urinates outside the toilet. If blood gets in anything, if another person sees it then [the girl] will be possessed by an evil spirit.” Another cultural restriction girls and their mothers used to observe was not to bathe until the fourth day of their period. In Bajura, girls told us that they are meant to drink cow urine on the fourth day and bathe to become pure and avoid infecting or polluting others.

Around half of girls in all districts reported not lifting heavy loads while menstruating. In Parsa and Bajura this was because they didn’t feel well or they didn’t feel physically able, where in Achham, girls said that their family did not allow them to lift heavy loads while menstruating. This was only spontaneously mentioned during the qualitative data collection in Parsa, perhaps reflecting the differences in lifestyle in families in Bajura and Achham compared to Parsa. Previous studies have indicated that the reason for this is fear of heavy bleeding<sup>35</sup>.

34 It was not clear for how many days or long a period.

35 Gastaldo, Denise, et al., *Body-map storytelling as research: Methodological considerations for telling the stories of undocumented workers through body mapping*, Creative Commons, Toronto, 2012.

### Restrictions on movement

Most girls and mothers reported that they did not go outside of the home without a purpose or reason, even when they were not menstruating. A girl in Achham explained: "Here, they do not allow us to go outside the house that often. People in our society frown on us going out alone. They say we are carelessly roaming around." The researchers asked girls whether they could go out as much as normal while they were menstruating the girls in Achham 29 per cent and Bajura 23 per cent and fewer girls in Parsa, 6 per cent, reported not being able to move around as much as normal while menstruating (see *Table B*). The girls were asked for the reasons for this in a multiple answer question from predefined categories; responses included that the girls either feared divine retribution, or they were forbidden by their family members to move around as normal. The qualitative data responses indicated that while some girls reported not wanting to go out because of discomfort or feeling unwell, girls in Bajura and Achham were particularly afraid of taking roads where there may be a temple, or a water source, or touching someone who they weren't meant to touch and therefore angering the gods, being cursed or causing ill health to themselves or their family. A girl from a WinS school in Achham explained: "We have to stay at home while menstruating. We have to sit still in our rooms. We cannot go anywhere, even nearby. If we go out then we are worried. There are temples. The roads may lead to temples, the roads might lead to a water source and people get angry if you walk in these roads, so they do not let you go there."

In Parsa menstrual restrictions on a girls' movement was also practiced, but girls were able to live/stay in their homes while menstruating. Like the girls from the Achham and Bajura districts they were restricted from worshipping. Muslim girls had slightly different restrictions: "In our Muslim religion girls are allowed to go to the vegetable or fruit garden but we are not allowed to touch the Qur'an as our family members say that something bad will happen," a Muslim girl in Parsa explained.

### Girls' current knowledge of menstruation

The participating girls were asked if they currently knew about the cause of menstruation;

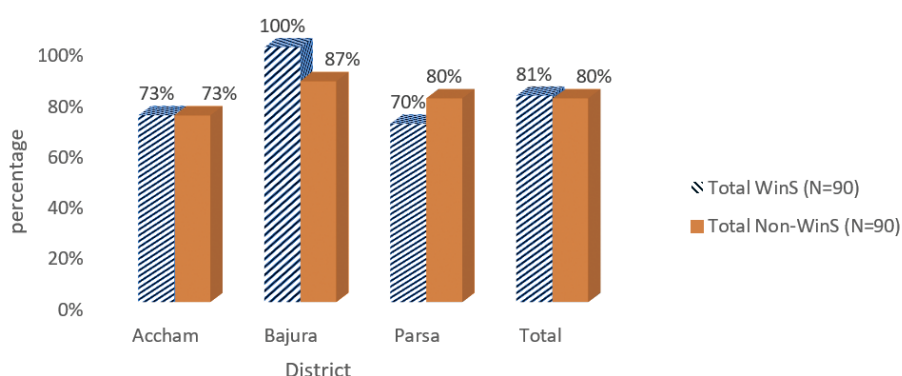
24.3 per cent in WinS schools and 32.7 per cent in non-WinS schools reported not knowing the cause or the physical reason for menstruation. Girls from all WinS and non-WinS schools reported receiving more information about menstruation after their menarche, but the majority of the girls, 76 per cent, in the Parsa district still didn't know the cause of menstruation (see *Table 8*). The qualitative data shows that the categories used in the structured questionnaire to elicit what girls and boys think was the cause of menstruation was not mutually exclusive. For example, menstruation could be described as 'a normal healthy process', 'bad blood being shed' and/or 'to have children'. However, because the participants were only able to choose one answer, the data might not be a true representation of their beliefs. This could be prevented in any future studies, if qualitative data was collected was prior to the survey.

### Boys current knowledge of menstruation

Most boys reported knowing something about menstruation in all districts and almost all lived with women who were menstruating. Boys in both WinS and non-WinS schools had similar extent of knowledge about menstruation, and there was no significant difference between knowledge of boys between the two types of school. The Pearson's chi-square test revealed a value of 0.035, 1 degree of freedom and a *p* value of 0.851, indicating a non-significant difference at a 95 per cent confidence level (see *Figure 3*).

The boys usually knew when women were menstruating because of restrictions the girls and women were expected to follow in their home. In the Parsa district, particularly in the WinS schools, boys said that their female relatives told them when they were menstruating or that they were in pain. Most reported they would be able to buy sanitary pads if asked to, but this question is of little relevance in Bajura and Achham where sanitary products were not easily available. Boys also said they had supported family members to manage their menstruation in all three districts. When comparing WinS and non-WinS schools, the data shows that boys were equally supportive in Achham and more so in WinS schools in Bajura and Parsa than in the districts' non-WinS schools. It is not possible to know the nature of this support because the study did not collect qualitative data

Figure 5: Boys knowing something about menstruation



from boys. 60 per cent of boys in WinS schools in Bajura had spoken to a family member about their menstruation, compared to only 13 per cent in non-WinS schools (see Table 16).

Fewer boys in the WinS schools, 39 per cent compared to 56 per cent of boys in non-WinS schools thought that the main cause of menstruation was ‘a normal healthy process’ (see Table 17). Boys in the Achham and Bajura districts were more likely to believe the cause of menstruation was shedding bad blood compared to boys interviewed in the Parsa district. In Achham and Parsa, some boys thought the main cause of menstruation was internal bleeding. Most received information from teachers or family members about menstruation, while a few had received information from health workers. Over 80 per cent of boys had received a class on sexual and reproductive health at school. Although boys found the class interesting, more boys in Parsa found the class embarrassing. Despite this, most boys felt the class should not be disaggregated by gender when teaching this subject (see Table 18).

### Girls’ sources of information

The main sources for receiving menstrual information tended to be from teachers and friends in the WinS schools and mothers in Non-WinS schools (see Table 8). The qualitative findings suggest that information from teachers was mainly about sexual and reproductive health and preventing disease. The girls were also taught how to make reusable sanitary pads, particularly in the WinS schools. Teachers also focused on the importance of cleanliness, good nutrition, rest and care during menstruation: “He [the teacher] taught us that we should regularly take a bath,

otherwise there would be germs and we would get infected,” a girl from Achham informed the research team, remembering her class lessons. While good hygiene is important to teach, this focus on cleanliness during menstruation may further reinforce ideas about menstruation being a polluting or dirty process and the focus on taking care during menstruation reinforces ideas that movements should be restricted and that women are vulnerable during this time. ‘Being vulnerable’ included health risks – including infections, snake bites and other animal attacks, and violent physical attacks including rape.

Many girls were dissatisfied with the way their classes about sexual and reproductive health (SRH) were taught. Teachers often got embarrassed and sometimes asked them to ‘self-study’ or study for themselves from books. It was difficult for teachers to manage mixed gender classes when teaching this topic and girls in the non-WinS schools felt that boys were disruptive and prevented them from learning. Despite these qualitative findings, in structured interviews around 60 per cent of girls said they would prefer the class to be taught in mixed gender classes. This may reflect the fact that they [the girls] felt it important that boys also learn about menstruation.

Although 25 per cent of girls in non-WinS and 33 per cent in WinS schools reported they were invited to ask questions during these classes, the qualitative data shows that they didn’t usually ask questions; “We didn’t ask, we only thought about things. We couldn’t say anything,” students from Bajura schools reported. The qualitative data analysis shows that questionnaire categories were not mutually exclusive, as girls often found the class embarrassing, however, they were also

interested in these classes and wanted to learn more information. Girls reported learning about the need to keep clean to prevent diseases, such as cancer, or sexually transmitted diseases. In a few schools, some teachers were tackling subjects such as consent for sexual intercourse and girls also mentioned the support of a NGO for learning about these issues. Most sexual and reproductive health classes were taught by the health teacher (see Table 19).

Although girls preferred to get support and ask questions about menstruation with female teachers, both male and female teachers taught classes that girls were satisfied with. Head teachers were asked at what age/class the menstruation related education was taught at their school: in Parsa, between grades six and seven; and in the Bajura and Achham districts between grades six and nine. Head teachers said that girls in these grades were between 11 and 14 years old. The head teachers felt it is important that the girls (and boys) learned about menstruation before age (onset) of their menarche, to enable the girls more confident menstruation management and encounter or have to deal with less teasing.

In comparison with the information received from teachers, the information that girls received from friends was less biological or technical and more about sharing of experiences or practical guidance. Girls said that they felt most comfortable talking to their friends about menstruation, except in the non-WinS schools in Parsa district, where girls felt more comfortable talking to their mothers. Through their friends girls learnt about how there are differences in menstrual flow, physical symptoms and different sanitary products that can be used: “We do know

about menstruation. We discussed it among our friends. Why is there so much bleeding? Why does our stomach hurt so much while we are menstruating? Do they also have the same problems?’ These things are discussed [freely] among friends,” a girl in a Bajura WinS school explained.

### Materials for managing menstruation

Most girls used reusable, used, dry cloths to manage their menstruation, with the exception of girls in the Bajura district, where many girls used reusable sanitary pads. The majority of girls in WinS schools - 53 per cent used reusable sanitary pads compared to only 2 per cent in non-WinS schools. In Bajura, 20 per cent of girls in non-WinS schools managed their menstruation by wearing several pairs of trousers at the same time and 6 per cent stated that they didn't use anything at all to manage their menstruation. In Achham 4 per cent of the girls managed their menstruation by wearing several pairs of trousers at the same time (see Table B.1). Very few girls used disposable sanitary pads; the analysis revealed a significant difference between girls using disposable sanitary pads in WinS and non-WinS schools when Pearson's chi-squared test revealed a value of 3.938, 1 degree of freedom and a p value of 0.047 which is significant at a 95 per cent confidence level. This difference is driven by girls in Parsa District, where girls at non-WinS schools used disposable pads more than at WinS schools.

Interestingly, despite the fact that 37 per cent of girls in WinS schools and 16 per cent in non-WinS schools in Parsa had a shop selling pads near their home, only 11.4 per cent of the girls in WinS schools and 17.9 per cent in non-WinS schools

Table B.1 Materials usually used to manage menstruation

Materials	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS
	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=300	N=300
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
Cloth (reusable)	94(94.0)	94(94.0)	42 (42.0)	68(68.0)	87(87.0)	87(87)	223(74.3)	249(83)
Sanitary pads (disposable)	1(1.0)	1(1.0)	2(2.0)	4(4.0)	6(6.0)	13(13)	9(3.0)	18(6.0)
Sanitary pads (reusable)	5(5.0)	1(1.0)	53 (53.0)	2(2.0)	7(7.0)	0(0)	65(21.7)	3(1.0)
Wears two or three trousers	0(0)	4(4.0)	0(0)	20(20.0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	24(8.0)
Other (nothing)	0(0)	0(0)	3(3.0)	6(6.0)	0(0)	0(0)	3(1.0)	6(2.0)

used disposable pads regularly.

Over 70 per cent of girls who used disposable sanitary pads reported that a relative bought them from a shop in town (as opposed to a local shop). Of those girls who didn't usually use disposable sanitary pads, this was because they were not easily available or they had never heard of them. In the non-WinS schools Bajura and Parsa, in both districts 49 per cent of the girls were most likely to have never heard of disposable sanitary pads (see Table C).

When girls were asked what they would like to wear to manage their menstruation, approximately half of the girls using cloth in all districts would like to use disposable sanitary pads. Those girls who were using reusable pads were satisfied with them and did not want to use anything else. Girls felt that sanitary pads were less likely to leak than cloth, which made them more confident to move around and sit with friends. A girl at a Bajura WinS school explained: "There are dance programmes and I feel relaxed and confident that it [pad] would not fall off and I can do anything freely during my dance performances." Some girls felt that using cloth was not good for their health, because germs could gather and enter into the uterus causing cancer and infections and a few thought that sanitary pads contained chemicals that caused cancer and infections. Girls heard mixed (and perhaps incorrect) messages about the effects of using disposable pads, reusable pads and cloth from shopkeepers, their mothers and

those giving reusable pad training. A student from a Parsa WinS who reported: "We are taught by madam [the teacher] that hazardous chemicals are mixed in those disposable pads." There was no clear pattern of opinion or hearsay/rumour/misinformation by district or by WinS or non-WinS schools.

A simultaneous advantage and disadvantage to disposable pads for many girls was the fact that they had to be thrown away after use. Using disposable pads was an expensive and unsustainable product option, particularly in the locations where they were not easily available. However girls felt disposable pads were cleaner and liked the fact they didn't have to wash and dry them. Although girls didn't necessarily have a private place to wash their reusable materials, they managed. A few girls, in Bajura and Parsa, reported having to use a different water source than normal to wash their reusable materials, due to prevailing superstitions and fear of 'polluting'. Girls in Parsa also mentioned not washing their cloths at night due to a fear of becoming infertile.

There were no clear practices or restrictions on disposing of pads or old cloths in any of the districts (see Table 23). Girls in all districts used a combination of burning, burying or throwing in the river or 'a place where no-one goes' after use. Cloths were usually washed before disposing and girls said that it was important they took care while disposing of used materials so that others didn't see their menstrual blood, so they, the

**Table C: Reasons for not using disposable sanitary pads**

Reasons	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS
	N=77	N=88	N=82	N=87	N=56	N=61	N=215	N=236
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
Not easily available	57 (74)	59 (67.0)	33 (40.2)	31 (35.6)	12 (21.4)	16 (26.2)	102 (47.4)	106 (45)
Never heard of them	4 (5.2)	9 (10.2)	32 (39.0)	43 (49.4)	12 (21.4)	30 (49.2)	48 (22.3)	82 (34.7)
Unsure of how to use them	9 (11.7)	16 (18.2)	14 (17.1)	24 (27.6)	15 (26.8)	18 (29.5)	38 (17.7)	58 (24.6)
Expensive	9 (11.7)	6 (6.8)	21 (25.6)	14 (16.1)	7 (12.5)	2 (3.3)	37 (17.2)	22 (9.3)
Embarrassed to go and buy them	4 (5.2)	3 (3.4)	13 (15.9)	15 (17.2)	5 (8.9)	2 (3.3)	22 (10.2)	20 (8.5)
Difficult to dispose of	1 (1.3)	0 (.0)	8 (9.8)	1 (1.1)	1 (1.8)	0 (.0)	10 (4.7)	1 (.4)
Due to easily availability of cloths	3 (3.9)	8 (9.1)	6 (7.3)	1 (1.1)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	9 (4.2)	9 (3.8)
Not likely to use pad	1 (1.3)	1 (1.1)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	6 (10.7)	0 (.0)	7 (3.3)	1 (.4)
Others	5 (6.5)	5 (5.7)	0 (.0)	1 (1.1)	8 (14.3)	2 (3.3)	13 (6.0)	8 (3.4)

girls, weren't the cause of other's ill health: "The germs in the used pad can affect people... if that used pad is thrown anywhere then the flies can transmit diseases," a WinS school girl explained to the team. Although girls burnt used materials in Bajura, some were concerned with this practice because: "It is said that the cloth of a living person should not be burned and the air will be polluted if they are burned, and then the polluted air will mix with water, and there will be high risk of spreading diseases." Some girls in Parsa also mentioned that if cloth is burned, then there was a chance of causing their infertility. In Parsa some girls were concerned about spirit possession if someone saw their menstrual blood or their stained menstrual cloth and 53 per cent of girls in WinS schools and 84 per cent of girls in non-WinS schools buried their used cloths in land away from their home. Girls in Bajura and Achham districts were more focused on preventing disease and illness in their washing, drying and disposing of their sanitary products actions and behaviours. They tended to throw them in a stream, bury them in a rubbish pit or burn them. Girls and mothers in Parsa were more concerned about other people seeing their pads or used cloth and being scolded by others for making the area dirty or being teased: "We feel embarrassed. If people see [the used/soiled cloth] they would make fun of us. They would know we were menstruating and they would talk about it."

Some girls in all districts felt embarrassed about drying their menstrual cloths or reusable sanitary pads in public: "We dry them at a place where no-one notices," a girl at a Parsa non-WinS school explained her routine. Only 21 per cent of girls who used cloths dried cloths outside in the normal place that the whole household used, where the clothes are dried. Others either hid them underneath clothes or dried them in place away from public view.

In the qualitative interviews, many girls had used reusable sanitary pads, despite the fact that only a few head teachers reported training girls in making reusable sanitary pads in only a few schools. Only one mother interviewed had heard of reusable pads. In all the WinS schools 62 per cent of girls had learned how to make reusable pads and 49 per cent had gone on to make them for themselves and 50 per cent had used the reusable pads. The WinS schools in Bajura had the highest numbers of girls making and using

reusable pads (see Table 24).

However, there were mixed responses about making and using reusable sanitary pads in Achham and Parsa. Some women and girls complained about the time it took to make them, including a WinS school girl: "I made it once and then left it. There was no time." Other girls complained of feeling uncomfortable using them: "Everybody said that reusable sanitary pads made them feel uncomfortable, so most girls do not use them," the girls at a Parsa WinS explained. Or the buttons break and then girls did not feel secure: "The button might break and it might fall out," was one of the concerns from a WinS school girl in Achham. Another girl said she used the cloth inside but not the outer material of the reusable sanitary pad. Some girls in Achham reported receiving training and training other girls and women in the community in how to make reusable pads. They were enthusiastic about them but admitted to not using them frequently: "We do not use those in every house. We use them when we are at school. We do not generally use it that much," the girls at a WinS school in Achham explained.

In the WinS schools in Bajura, girls were more enthusiastic about reusable pads saying that they absorb a lot of blood, they can use them again and most importantly: "Blood will not leak outside and stain our clothes, and we can go wherever we like. No-one will know we are menstruating." When girls received the training they were sometimes asked to bring cloth from home to put inside the reusable pad and that this was difficult for some girls: "Our friends still feel very shy, their families are poor and they feel extremely embarrassed bringing these cotton clothes. Some of them do not bring cloths," a student at a WinS School in Bajura sympathised.

### Menstrual management during the school day

Girls were asked the question: 'If you start menstruating suddenly at school, what do you do?' In the WinS schools in Achham -47 per cent and Parsa - 40 per cent of the participants answered that they would ask their teachers for sanitary materials. Whereas this rarely happened in Bajura district and in non-WinS schools (see Table D). The qualitative data shows that in the Parsa district the resupply of pads in one school was sporadic and students were expected to



contribute (financially) to resupply: “Sometimes, the school keeps some by asking students telling them; ‘You all yourself collect five rupees each and buy and keep it so that you all can use at the time of emergency’... If we [the school] keep them then everyone comes to ask for it and we cannot provide these to everyone. There is also no separate fund from the school for buying pads,” a Parsa health Teacher at a WinS school explained. The district head teachers corroborated/confirmed this saying: “Earlier we used to provide pad/ cotton from the school but now it is finished so it’s not provided by the school.”

However in the schools where supplies were provided, one WinS school in Achham, the girls were very pleased with the availability of pads in the school and teachers were proud to tell us they offered this facility: “We provide sanitary pads and medicines from this school and we have also formed a separate committee for management of adolescent reproductive health where funds are raised and deposited on the account of one of the madam and sir who formed this committee. Pads and medicine needed for menstruating girls are provided by this committee.” Most girls in Achham and Parsa said that they felt uneasy asking for pads from male teachers and would prefer to ask a female teacher for assistance if they required pads or are having difficulties with their menstruation: “Sometimes I feel a little shy. When I have to say that I am menstruating and I need a sanitary pad when our ‘mam’ is not there or on the days she is on leave, it is very difficult for me to ask for one from ‘sir’. I feel very embarrassed asking ‘sir’ [male teacher],” a girls

from an Achham WinS school explained. In the structured interviews girls were asked who they felt most comfortable asking for sanitary materials from: in the WinS schools it tended to be female teachers; whereas in non-WinS school it was friends, however this may be because of the distribution of female teachers in schools.

Girls in non-WinS schools in Parsa and Achham districts who start menstruating suddenly and who did not take pads from teachers at school, tended to go home and remain there. In Bajura in WinS schools girls either went home and stayed home or they changed and returned to school. In non-WinS schools in Bajura 58 per cent of girls ‘did nothing’ if they started menstruating in school (see Table D). Even when sanitary pads were available at schools 8.4 per cent of girls still went home and stayed there (see Table 25a).

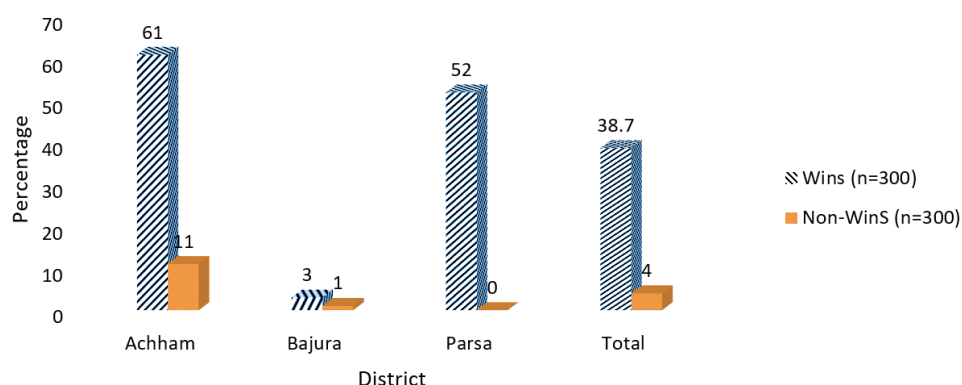
Girls in Bajura told the research team that if they started menstruating in school they would sit on their sandals - so that the blood did not stain the bench: “If we feel difficult we put a sandal down and then the sandal gets stained with blood,” a girl from a Bajura non-WinS school informed the team; or they would fold their trousers as best they could to prevent a stain from being seen. The girls from all the non-WinS schools in all the districts, 52 per cent, reported that they go home, change and stay there. Girls reported usually telling another teacher (not their class teacher), if they had to leave the school during their menstruation. Most girls said that they don’t tell the reason they need to leave school, apart from in WinS schools in Parsa were 74 per cent of girls said they would tell. Girls were not routinely taught by a female teacher in any of

**Table D: Menstrual management at school**

Management	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
<b>When you start menstruating and you are at school, how do you usually manage?</b>								
Ask teacher for materials	47 (47.0)	4 (4.0)	2 (2.0)	0 (.0)	40 (40.0)	0 (.0)	89 (29.7)	4 (1.3)
Go home change and stay	23 (23.0)	53 (53.0)	33 (33.0)	17 (17.0)	25 (25.0)	86 (86.0)	81 (27.0)	156 (52.0)
You do nothing	11 (11.0)	27 (27.0)	17 (17.0)	58 (58.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	28 (9.3)	85 (28.3)
Go home change and come back	14 (14.0)	10 (10.0)	24 (24.0)	6 (6.0)	21 (21.0)	8 (8.0)	59 (19.7)	24 (8.0)
Use materials that you brought with you	1 (1.0)	4 (4.0)	10 (10.0)	9 (9.0)	2 (2.0)	1 (1.0)	13 (4.3)	14 (4.7)
Ask friends for materials	3 (3.0)	1 (1.0)	11 (11.0)	9 (9.0)	5 (5.0)	1 (1.0)	19 (6.3)	11 (3.7)
Go to a nearby school shop and buy materials	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	3 (3.0)	1 (1.0)	5 (5.0)	4 (4.0)	8 (2.7)	5 (1.7)
Other (don't know)	1 (1.0)	1 (1.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	2 (2.0)	0 (.0)	3 (1)	1 (.3)

Note: n=100 each in WinS and N-WinS in each district.

Figure 6: Sanitary materials available at school when students needed



the schools the research team visited, which may explain their responses. Often they would ask their friends to ask for permission to leave or to ask for pads or other facilities (see Table D).

### Absence from school

School absences attributed to menstruation were difficult to capture. This study tried to measure school absences by giving diaries to girls and through the structured interviews. In the structured interviews, girls were asked to recall from the last three months how many days they were absent from school because of their menstruation and for how many days they were absent for part of the day because of their menstruation. There was a significant difference between girls in WinS and non-WinS schools missing school. Pearson's chi-squared test revealed a value of 4.391, 1 degree of freedom and p value of 0.036 which is significant at 95 per cent confidence level (see Table D.1). This difference was driven by girls in Parsa who reported missing whole days or part of the day of school while menstruating - more than in other districts (see Table 26). In the non-WinS schools in Parsa 49 per cent of girls had missed

at least one day in the past three months due to menstruation, while 34 per cent had missed a day in WinS schools (see Figure 5). In all the WinS and non-WinS schools of three districts, the main reasons given for missing part of the day were pain and fear of leakage (see Table 26). Girls who had missed a whole day of school were 15.3 per cent in the WinS schools and 22 per cent non-WinS schools. The two main reasons given for their absences were: pain - WinS schools 71.7 per cent and in the non-WinS schools 75.8 per cent; and fear of leakage 21.7 per cent and 15.2 per cent in WinS and non-WinS schools (see Table 26).

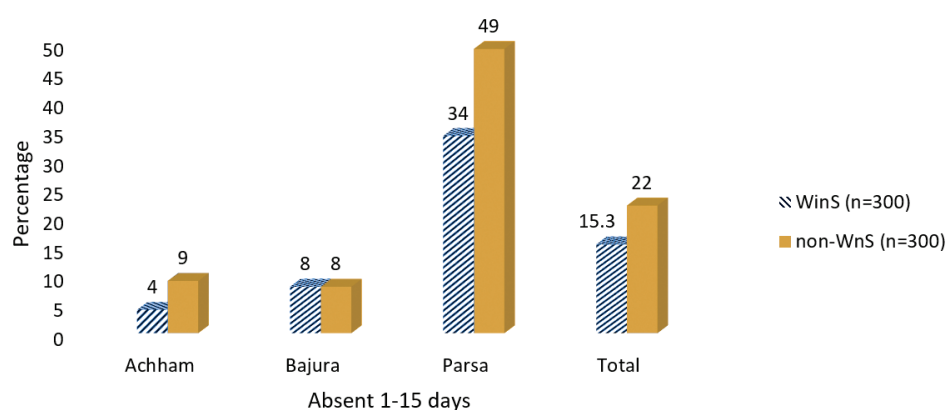
While fear of leakage was a most common reason given for absences in the Bajura and Achham districts; fewer girls missed school in these districts than in Parsa.

Of those girls who managed their menstruation by wearing several pairs of trousers, none of the girls reported missing school for a whole day or even part of the day. It was the girls who managed their menstruation with cloths who were more likely to report missing school for either the whole day or part of the day (see Tables 21 and 22). Most girls

Table D.1 Whole days missed at school in the past 3 months due to menstruation

Days	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS
	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=300	N=300
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
0 days	96 (96)	91 (91.0)	92 (92.0)	92 (92.0)	66 (66.0)	51 (51.0)	254 (84.7)	234 (78)
Days (1 to 15)	4 (4.0)	9 (9.0)	8 (8.0)	8 (8.0)	34 (34.0)	49 (49.0)	46 (15.3)	66 (22.0)

Figure 7: Whole school days missed in the past three months due to menstruation



used cloths to manage their menstruation. Among the girls who used reusable sanitary pads only 7 per cent missed school during their menstruation.

Girls were asked to record in their diaries when they were absent from school and the reasons for this for the two months prior to the study. In total 80 per cent, a total of 479, of diaries were filled and collected: 73 per cent of diaries in Achham, 88 per cent in Bajura and 79 per cent in Parsa. Amongst all the girls participating in the study, from all the districts, those who did not return their diaries: 42 absent from school when researchers went to collect diaries; 18 had married and left school; 52 had lost their diary; and 9 had left school.

The findings are presented about girls missing a whole day of school, due to the difficulties with data collection due to the school holidays in month two, the discussion is focused on month one, where there was better reporting and a more accurate representation of a 'normal' school month. Data from month two shows similar trends as in month one, but the response rate was lower. In month one, there was between 63 per cent to 71 per cent attendance rate on the days when girls were menstruating reported from all the girls in all the study districts and schools.

Table E: School absenteeism during a one month period

Menstruation	Month1		
	Absent	Part of the day	Total number
Day 1	34.1%	3.2%	475
Day 2	31.4%	2.5%	472

Menstruation	Month1		
	Absent	Part of the day	Total number
Day 3	30.2%	2.3%	470
Day 4	33.0%	1.5%	412
Day 5	26.6%	1.5%	263

Among the girls who provided reasons for being absent due to menstruation on first day of first month (see Table 27), menstrual pain was the most common reason given from the girls who missed a whole day of school (25 - 49 per cent). This was also more common during the first four days of menstruation. Only a few girls missed a whole day of school because of tiredness, fear of leakage, or 'other' reasons. A few girls missed half (or part of the) day of school because of pain (14 per cent to 60 per cent), tiredness (13 per cent to 20 per cent) or fear of leakage (7 - 27 per cent). Absence due to fear of leakage was most common on day three of menstruation. Of those girls who were absent because of menstruation related reasons, from a total of 53 girls, 83 per cent girls who used cloths were more likely to report missing school (see Table 28). None of the girls who managed their menstruation by wearing several pairs of trousers missed school for a whole day or part of the day.

The girls, mothers and teachers felt that there was an awareness that it was not good to miss school and that girls should attend even when they were menstruating. A WinS school girl explained: "In the past girls didn't come to school when they were menstruating, but nowadays they come." A mother from Achham WinS school told the research team: "Some girls miss school because of the earlier practices, some may not

have been allowed to go to school, but we have not done this.” The qualitative data concurred with quantitative data, as girls said that pain and discomfort sometimes prevented them from attending school: “We cannot concentrate on what sir is saying because of menstrual cramps... if they are very bad then there is no need to go to school,” a girl in an Achham WinS school said. Heavy bleeding and not being able to bathe were other reasons girls gave for not attending school. A WinS school girl in Achham told the team that: “Some girls have heavy bleeding, it smells foul... some do not take a bath, most girls do not come to school because they have not taken a bath.” Head teachers told us that in two WinS schools and one non-WinS school pain killers were available. Teachers and girls noted the absence of these facilities in other schools and were keen to have these available: “Sometimes when they suffer from menstrual cramps, we could not get medicines for them in time. There is no resting room here - that is why it is causing a bit of difficulty [for girls to attend school],” confirmed a health teacher in an Achham non-WinS school.

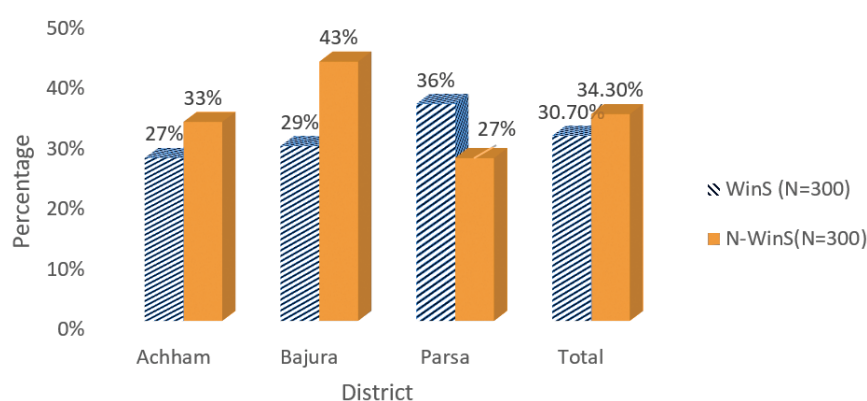
Over a third of girls in the study said they sometimes had the problem of leakage of their menstrual blood while at school. This was more commonly cited in Bajura in non-WinS schools where 43 per cent of girls reported have sometimes had leakage issues and of those, 78 per cent said that they would stay at school if this happened. 64 per cent of girls in Bajura in WinS schools stated that they would go home, change and stay at home. This could often be the case if their houses were located far from the school, it

was not considered feasible or practical to return to school after changing. In Achham over 80 per cent of girls in WinS and non-WinS schools said they would go home, change and stay at home if they had a leakage. While in Parsa 56 per cent in the WinS schools and 93 per cent in the non-WinS schools said they would go home change and stay home. One reason for the high numbers that would stay at home if they had leakage could be fear of teasing when they returned (see Table 30).

## Teasing

The qualitative data collected showed that girls in all districts were scared of ridicule from classmates, particularly boys. A girl at a WinS school in Bajura explained “We don’t wear underwear. The thing that makes us scared the most is that blood might get stained on our clothes and the boys might tease us.” Another girl from a non-WinS in Bajura said: “If we do not use pads, then there will be leakage of blood, then the boys will make fun of me that I am menstruating. I feel really embarrassed sitting in front of my friends.” One girl from Achham WinS school recalled an embarrassing incident her friend had experienced: “Everyone saw the blood on her bench. The boys made fun of her a lot. I saw her crying after she was teased a lot by all the boys.” Cultural menstrual restrictions also brought attention to the fact that a girl is menstruating, making her more vulnerable to teasing: “If we need to drink water we need to go a little bit further away. Then they wonder why I don’t drink water and then they start teasing me, pointing out my menstruation, telling me

Figure 8: Sometimes have leakage during school hours



that I should have stayed back home and that they can see the blood stain at the back. Then I felt very uncomfortable,” a girl from a non-WinS school in Bajura pointed out. The qualitative data collected revealed that generally WinS schools took teasing issues more seriously than non-WinS schools and punishments were mentioned for the perpetrators. Girls confirmed that although the amount of teasing had reduced, girls having their first menstruation were still likely to be teased. Some girls handled the teasing by talking back to those who teased, but for the girls who were less confident, teasing was a very unpleasant experience and something that made them uncomfortable; 21 per cent of girls said that they had seen teasing in WinS schools at least once a month (see Table F). Equal numbers of girls in both WinS and non-WinS schools, 44 per

cent, worried about teasing. More girls in WinS schools had been teased 20 per cent compared to 12 per cent in non-WinS schools. Although qualitative data showed that girls feared teasing and complained about teasing from boys, the data showed that girls and boys were equally responsible for teasing in WinS schools.

The research team asked the boys about teasing of girls. While a few boys admitted witnessing menstruation related teasing of girls, most reported challenging those who were teasing they witnessed.

### Toilet facilities in schools

The researchers made observations of the toilets and hand washing facilities in 11 out of 12 schools. A locked toilet in in one non-WinS school

Table F: Teasing Practices

Teasing	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
<b>Ever challenged teasing because of menstruation</b>	14(14.0)	11(11)	20(20)	14(14)	19(19)	5(5)	53(17.7)	30(10.0)
<b>When you have your period in school do you worry about being teased?</b>								
Worry	37(37)	43(43)	51(51)	35(35)	44(44)	52(52)	132(44)	130(43.3)
Not worry	63(63)	57(57)	49(49)	65(65)	56(56)	48(48)	168(56)	170(56.7)
<b>Who are you worried will tease you</b>								
	n=37	n=43	n=51	n=35	n=44	n=52	n=132	n=130
Girls	13(35.1)	23(53.5)	20(39)	9(25.7)	28(63.6)	31(59.6)	61(46.2)	63(48.5)
Boys	30(81.1)	31(72.1)	44(86)	33(94)	25(56.8)	34(65.4)	99(75.0)	98(75.4)
Female Teachers	0(0)	1(2.3)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	1(8)
<b>Experienced or observed teasing of girls about menstruation</b>								
	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=300	N=300
	11(11)	14(14)	27(27)	16(16)	23(23)	7(7)	61(20.3)	37(12.3)
<b>How often have you experienced or observed teasing of girls about menstruation in the past 3 months</b>								
	n=11	n=14	n=27	n=16	n=23	n=7	n=61	n=37
Once a week	0(0)	0(0)	1(3.7)	0(0)	2(8.7)	0(0)	3(4.9)	0(0)
Once a month	5(45.5)	1(7.1)	5(18.5)	1(6.3)	3(13.0)	0(0)	13(21.3)	2(5.4)
Once in 2 months	3(27.3)	1(7.1)	7(25.9)	3(18.8)	2(8.7)	1(14.3)	12(19.7)	5(13.5)
Once in 3 months	2(18.2)	4(28.6)	2(7.4)	4(25.0)	4(17.4)	2(28.6)	8(13.1)	10(27.0)
Not experienced or observed in past 3 months	1(9.1)	8(57.1)	12(44.4)	8(50.0)	12(52.2)	4(57.1)	25(41.0)	20(54.1)
<b>If you have ever seen teasing ,who has done teasing*</b>								
	n=10	n=6	n=15	n=8	n=11	n=3	n=36	n=17
Girls	4(40.0)	3(50.0)	6(40.0)	1(12.5)	8(72.7)	2(66.7)	18(50.0)	6(35.3)
Boys	9(90.0)	3(50.0)	10(66.7)	7(87.5)	4(36.4)	1(33.3)	23(63.9)	11(64.7)

\*percentage may exceed 100 due to multiple responses; n=100 each in WinS and N-WinS in each district.

Table G: Observation of school facilities

Observation	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total*	
	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS
	N=2	N=2	N=2	N=2	N=2	N=1	N=6	N=5
Toilet in the school	2	2	2	2	2	1	6	5
Separate girls' only toilet	2	2	1	2	2	1	5	5
Child friendly Water tap	0	0	1	1	1	0	2	1
Disabled friendly toilets	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Separate toilet for secondary school girls	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0

in Parsa was not able to be observed. In summary all schools had a toilet facility in the school compound. Five schools in both the WinS and non-WinS schools had a separate girls' toilet, two WinS schools and one in non-WinS school had a child friendly water tap and only one WinS school had a disabled friendly toilet (see Table F).

In the WinS schools, there were a total of 13 enclosed toilets and 29 open pan toilets<sup>36</sup>; whereas in the non-WinS schools a total of six enclosed and four open pan toilets were available to use. Of the enclosed toilets, only half the toilets had a functioning lock on the door. In WinS schools the WASH programme was trying to ensure that the toilets have doors; schools that did not have doors reported that they did not have an operation or maintenance fund for this work. At present the Government and development partners supporting the WinS programme have ensured the compulsory provision of an operation and maintenance fund that should positively address and minimize the problem (see Table 31).

None of the toilets had nearby soap and water facilities for hand washing. Only three toilets in the WinS schools and two in the non-WinS schools had a child-friendly water tap (one that is at an age appropriate height for children). Five toilets in the WinS schools and four in the non WinS toilets were observed to be clean. In the Achham district schools there were no clean toilets and none had enough light. Apart from one toilet in a WinS school, all toilets were without derogatory graffiti, but only five toilets in WinS schools and three in non-WinS schools were inward facing on the school compound, and therefore not considered private. The head teacher in the WinS school in Parsa with the derogatory graffiti was aware of

the offensive graffiti and had taken actions to get rid of it. Only one toilet in Parsa amongst all the schools in the study had disabled access (see Table 32). The policy set out by the Government and development partners clearly states that school toilets should be child, gender, disabled and environmentally friendly. However most of the toilets that were constructed before 2009 do not fulfil this criteria; almost all the new toilet blocks constructed after 2009 do fulfil the criteria.

Most girls don't change their sanitary materials at school: "If we go to school then we do not change sanitary materials. There will be 'tension' to change at school... there is no facility to change and throw the used cloth at school," reported a girl at a WinS school in Achham Girls in the WinS schools in Bajura report changing at school more than other schools. In total 98 per cent of girls in WinS schools and 94 per cent in non-WinS schools reported being able to use the toilet during the break most of the time (see Table 33).

Many toilets in the schools reported they had a water supply problem. When there was no water, it was difficult for the school to keep them clean. Toilets were either locked or not used when they got dirty: "The toilet has not fulfilled the needs of girls. They are having trouble changing their pads as the toilets were very dirty. So instead they just go towards the forest to change... We talked about it with the office assistant and also requested him to open the toilets, but he refused saying that the toilets were very dirty. We requested him to clean them, but he said there was no water to do so," a health teacher in a non-WinS school in Achham explained. In the interviews with mothers, the research team found

36 Enclosed toilets means having proper locking system and a door; open pan toilet means without door.

that they were often unaware of the poor/unusable state of the toilet facilities in the school.

Where recent changes in toilet facilities had been made, girls appreciated these and felt good that there were separate toilets for girls. These separate toilets also allowed the girls the possibility to change their sanitary materials and keep clean at school. Girls said that the main factor that would make a difference to the state of the toilets, was a regular water supply to keep them clean and ensure they remain usable. One girl from a WinS school in Achham told the team: “If a menstruating girl goes in right after someone uses it, then there will be blood there that is difficult to take care of. The other girls feel bad seeing this.” All the girls all wanted a separate private place to change and this request was acknowledged by teachers: “There should be the facility that the girls can change their cloths and attend the class during menstruation if they feel odd. It would be better if that facility will be there though that is not happening,” pointed out a health teacher at a WinS school in Bajura. In a WinS school in Parsa, there was a changing room linked to the toilet for menstruating girls. This was locked and opened with permission from the teacher. Although this was appreciated by girls, they said it wasn’t completely private. They also mentioned that the toilet and rest room should be not be adjoining because the toilet smelled.

Girls in a non-WinS school in Bajura mentioned the difficulty of not having a separate girl’s toilet: “We feel it is difficult to go inside that toilet. There is a door but it cannot be locked. Boys gather there at the side...there is a hole in the ground so

boys sit there and keep seeing. In this toilet small children defecate more and make the toilet dirty, and then we feel dirty. That is why the toilet is not usable.” Younger children were also reported to make the toilets dirty in other schools. Girls in a WinS school also mentioned the difficulty of using the toilet without a lock: “There is no lock there, so how can we go?” the girls at a non-WinS school in Parsa asked.

Most girls didn’t wash their reusable materials at school, except for in WinS schools in Bajura where 22 per cent reported washing their sanitary materials at school. There was a lack of water, soap and available place to wash and dry the materials which prevented this activity in most schools (see Table 30). A few girls also mentioned being too embarrassed to wash their cloths at school. Only two WinS schools had had adequate disposal facilities for used cloths or pads. Girls would have preferred disposal facilities, but managed by either taking their materials home or throwing them in the jungle or river: “There is no facility to change and throw the used cloth at our school. If anyone sees it then we feel embarrassed. We take it home in a polythene bag and wash it,” a girl from a WinS school in Achham told the research team. Girls felt embarrassed, but there was also a belief that used materials spread disease, or a girl can be cursed if another person sees the cloth. This made it more important to find an appropriate place for disposal and made it more stressful for girls when they were unable to easily find disposal facilities.

**Table H: Comfort level in school during menstruation**

Comfort Level	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS
	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
<b>When you are menstruating, how comfortable do you feel playing sports?</b>								
Comfortable	16(16.0)	16(16.0)	35(35.0)	31(31.0)	20(20.0)	17(17.0)	71(23.7)	64(21.3)
Not comfortable	73(73.0)	75(75.0)	64(64.0)	66(66.0)	69(69.0)	66(66.0)	206(68.7)	207(69.0)
No sports at school/don't play sports	11(11.0)	9(9.0)	1(1.0)	3(3.0)	11(11.0)	17(17.0)	23(7.7)	29(9.7)
<b>When you are menstruating, how comfortable do you feel being in the class with boys?</b>								
Comfortable	18(18.0)	4(4.0)	20(20.0)	27(27.0)	18(18.0)	7(7.0)	56(18.7)	38(12.7)
Not comfortable	82(82.0)	96(96.0)	80(80.0)	73(73.0)	82(82.0)	93(93.0)	244(81.3)	262(87.3)

Table I: Boys' opinion about activities that can't be done by girls during menstruation\*

Opinion	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	WinS	N-Wins	WinS	N-Wins	WinS	N-Wins	WinS	N-Wins
	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=90)	(N=90)
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
Cannot play sports	11(36.7)	10(35.0)	12(40.0)	7(31.7)	22(73.3)	21(70.0)	45(50.0)	38(42.2)
Cannot go to the board to answer a question	6(20.0)	2(13.3)	6(20.0)	3(15.0)	9(30.0)	10(33.3)	21(23.3)	15(16.7)
Cannot stand up in class to answer a question	2(6.7)	5(11.7)	6(20.0)	0(10.0)	3(10.0)	4(13.3)	11(12.2)	9(10.0)
Cannot lift heavy loads	0(.0)	0(.0)	0(.0)	0(.0)	3(10.0)	0(.0)	3(3.3)	0(.0)
Cannot go to collect firewood	0(.0)	1(1.7)	0(.0)	0(.0)	0(.0)	0(.0)	0(.0)	1(1.1)
Others	1(3.3)	1(3.3)	1(3.3)	0(1.7)	3(10.0)	1(3.3)	5(5.6)	2(2.2)
Don't know	0(.0)	0(.0)	0(.0)	0(.0)	2(6.7)	0(.0)	2(2.2)	0(.0)
They can do anything	16(53.3)	12(46.7)	17(56.7)	21(63.3)	2(6.7)	1(3.3)	35(38.9)	34(37.8)

\* Percentage may exceed 100 due to multiple responses

## Participation in school

Girls were asked about how comfortable they felt doing or participating in specific activities in school while they were menstruating. Most of the girls 69 per cent, in all the study schools in all the districts didn't feel comfortable playing sports while menstruating and girls 81 per cent in WinS schools and 87 per cent in non-WinS schools, did not feel comfortable being in a class with boys when they were menstruating (see *Table G*).

Only 45 per cent of all the girls always felt able to sit in front of the classroom and around half could always focus on what the teacher was saying. 32 per cent in WinS schools and 43 per cent in non-WinS schools felt that they could never write on the board if they were asked to while they were menstruating and 15 per cent in

WinS and 21 per cent said they could never raise their hand to answer when the teacher asked a question while they were menstruating. The majority of the girls, 78 per cent in WinS and 68 per cent in non-WinS schools, felt able to do their homework and 70 per cent felt they could attend school while they were menstruating (see *Table 34*).

The research team asked the boys what activities girls could do while menstruating. Approximately half the boys in the Bajura and Achham schools thought that girls could do everything, however in Parsa most boys, over 70 per cent, felt that girls could not do sports while they were menstruating. Some boys in the Parsa district also felt that girls couldn't go to the board in class, or stand up to answer a question (see *Table H*).



# LIMITATIONS

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The data on attendance from diaries was unreliable due to there being an extended holiday in the second month of the study and some problems with the recording and collecting for the 'additional' month, as explained earlier in the report. Therefore data collected from the first month of the study was used to examine attendance. Girls were not asked to record information for the whole month, rather they were asked to just record whether they were absent or present at school for the days when they menstruated. Therefore it was not possible to compare the girls' attendance while menstruating with the girls' usual attendance rate when they were not menstruating.

Information was not collected about the distance from girls' home to the school which may have influenced their absence while experiencing sudden menstruation or leakage, including if they went home to change and did not return to school. Systematic data collection on the regularity of water supply in schools would have enabled a more nuanced examination of the context in which girls were managing their menstruation. If schools were visited while there was water, then it was more likely to encounter a cleaner toilet. Data was not collected on the presence of a female teacher in the school, or the numbers of full-time female staff. The research team was unable to know in advance whether there was a female teacher in the school before they visited as the sampling criteria had to be predefined, clear and consistent. Therefore the health and population teachers were uniformly sampled. It would have been beneficial to speak

to a female teacher, instead of the health teacher as they were usually the main source of support for the girls when they were menstruating.

Students attending school were the only participants of this study and children who were out of school were excluded.

Data was collected in larger schools in order to satisfy the research team's sample size. The experiences in larger schools might be different from smaller schools in terms of facilities, teacher availability and remoteness. This factor should also be considered when interpreting the results of this study.

The questionnaire questions were limited by the lack of qualitative research to inform question options and style. For example, several questions did not have mutually exclusive categories and could have been better framed as '*tick all that apply*' instead of single answer questions/ answers.

When considering attendance and comfort levels while menstruating it would have been useful to ask girls about days and their school attendance (and performance) when they weren't menstruating, in order to estimate how different a girl feels during her period. Unfortunately this was not possible within the scope of this study. Despite these limitations, the study conclusions are sufficient to demonstrate the need to take further action to make girls feel more comfortable and able to attend school and improve upon menstrual hygiene facilities, knowledge and challenge negative cultural practices.

# DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report described the situation of menstruating girls in the rural districts: Achham, Bajura and Parsa and considered the effect of the WinS school programme in each district, compared to non-WinS schools in the selected districts. Conclusions are presented according to the three main research questions and recommendations are offered:

## 1. How does menstruation affect girls' attendance and what are the role of WASH facilities in influencing attendance?

The analysis of the responses from one month of the personal diary data collection from all three districts showed that the majority of girls 63 - 71 per cent, did not miss any school when menstruating. Attendance was lower in Parsa when compared with other districts, despite fewer social/cultural restrictions on menstruating girls. Girls in Parsa did not report as high levels of menstrual *chhaupadi* seclusion and had fewer menstrual cultural restrictions than girls in Achham and Bajura. Parsa also had a higher use of disposable pads and reported less leakage concerns than the other districts. When girls were absent from school, the main reasons given were due to pain, discomfort and tiredness. Fewer girls missed school because they were afraid of leakage. Painkillers were only provided in three schools - two WinS schools and one non-WinS school. The provision of pads in schools was beneficial to prevent girls from having to leave school if they started menstruating suddenly, however 27 per cent of girls in WinS schools and 52 per cent of girls in non-WinS schools still said that they would go home and stay at home if they started menstruating suddenly or had a leakage. Even when sanitary pads were available at schools when students needed to manage their menstruation, 8.4 per cent of girls still went home and stayed at home and did not return to school for the rest of the day. The incidence of leakage was low - indicating that girls did not miss many

days of school because due to leakage concerns. However, the teasing that occurred if leakage was discovered, particularly by boys, made it difficult for girls to return to school.

Most girls did not change their sanitary products at school due to: the lack of an appropriate place to change; lack of privacy; and irregular water supply. A regular supply of water and gender disaggregated toilets with locks were conditions identified by the girls in the study as being very important and they did not use toilets that were dirty. Dirty/unclean toilets were often locked, especially during times when there was an inadequate water supply. However, despite the lack of facilities for girls, they were for the majority of the time, attending school.

### Recommendations:

- Accessible, clean, lockable, age and gender specific toilets with a consistent water supply, soap and hand washing facilities and waste disposal;
- Availability of menstrual management supplies, to be available at all times and regularly re-stocked;
- Pain management and private space to rest available for girls when required;
- A consistent, empowering programme that provides accurate information and challenges negative associations and social practices.

## 2. What are the existing WASH facilities in schools and how do these meet girls' needs?

The WASH facilities for menstruating girls need to be comprehensive, clean, private and safe, with water, soap and waste disposal. No school in the study met all of these criteria. Girls appreciated having sanitary pads available in schools and they felt much more comfortable asking for help from female teachers or staff.

Interaction with NGOs and health facilities was beneficial for providing information however, this was felt by the girls to be not enough and indicates the need for a permanent female member of staff to be available to help girls when required. In Parsa, only 25 per cent of girls in WinS schools received most of their information about menstrual health from teachers, 42 per cent from friends and 58 per cent from their mothers. Around 50 per cent of girls felt that the sexual and reproductive health (SRH) classes were interesting but embarrassing and reported that even after the class they did not receive enough adequate information about their menstruation – including the physical reasons for and management of. Information focused on technicalities and (cultural) restrictions and the hygiene focus of training reinforced ideas about menstruation being a dirty, polluting process. Boys frequently disrupted classes about sexual and reproductive health and girls felt unable to ask questions. Girls sought and wanted information on materials, reasons for pain, reasons for menstruating and information on differences in menstrual flow.

Most girls used reusable, used, dry cloths because not all the girls had been given training on making reusable sanitary pad to manage their menstruation, except in Bajura where 53 per cent of girls in the WinS schools used reusable sanitary pads. In the non-WinS schools in Bajura 20 per cent of girls managed their menstruation by wearing several pairs of trousers and 6 per cent did not use anything at all. Not all girls in Bajura wore underwear and it was unclear whether the reusable pad training could be effectively used in these situations. When examining diary data about those girls who managed their menstruation with several pairs of trousers, none reported missing school for a whole day or even part of the day. 84 per cent of girls who missed a whole day or part of the school day used cloths to manage their menstruation. Girls using and wearing reusable pads in Bajura were very satisfied with them; whereas girls in Achham and Parsa who had received training on reusable pad making, were more ambivalent and would prefer to use disposable sanitary pads.

### Recommendations:

- Responsive teaching, in gender disaggregated and age appropriate classes,

in order to create a 'safe' environment for girls to ask questions and contribute to the discussions. Further support and resources to the teachers so that they feel equipped and confident in answering questions and providing accurate information was also required;

- More female teachers, or at least a permanent trained full-timed female staff member, in order to provide further support to the girls at school;
- Review of what age (class) the SRH and MHM classes are conducted. Currently the classes are conducted between classes 6-9 but it is crucial that the classes are conducted before the onset of menarche, thus the classes may need to be introduced at an upper primary level to ensure coverage;
- Greater awareness and support for appropriate menstrual hygiene products. For example re-useable sanitary pads were not often the best, appropriate or preferred choice. However a consistent, easily available and regularly re-stocked supplies were required and greatly appreciated;
- Regularly maintained toilet facilities with a consistent water supply, which were clean, private, gender and age segregated, with adequate waste disposal are required in all schools.

### 3. How does menstruation affect girls' ability to fully participate in school and community life?

In Bajura and Achham menstrual seclusion - *chhaupadi* was still commonly practiced and 60 per cent of girls in Achham and 17 per cent of girls in Bajura were not able to sleep in the same house as the rest of the family. Although girls felt that practices were slowly changing, they were still restricted in their physical movements and activities due to the fear of polluting someone else or being the cause of something which would then bring misfortune or shame to them or their family members, including illness, misfortune and infertility. Seclusion at first menstruation (menarche) was common in all districts and caused girls to be absent from school for up to a week. In all three districts girls were restricted from entering the kitchen, cooking and worshipping. Teasing and ridicule of

menstruating girls was common, particularly by boys. Community members and older household members, particularly women, were influential in policing restrictions. Fear of leakage and not feeling 'well' at school, affected girls' ability to write on the board, participate in lessons or activities and play sports. The girls reported sometimes being affected by their menstruation discomfort or fear of embarrassment, making it difficult for them to do classwork and concentrate on the teacher and their lessons, but this may also be the case when they are not menstruating.

### Recommendations:

- More involvement of mothers, who are often the main source of information – yet are often unable to adequately answer questions, especially ones involving physical changes and processes. Provide learning and further engagement opportunities for mothers;

- Greater involvement of older generations and the community in order to challenge and change negative social customs, including the practice of *chhaupadi*, and provide and promote empowering knowledge;
- Continued engagement with boys and accurate gender empowerment and sexual health information given in classes and encourage and foster greater sensitivity and awareness.

# CONCLUSION

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The WinS programme was implemented differently in different places and WinS and non-WinS schools in this study were in different contexts which makes direct comparison difficult. Despite this, the triangulation from multiple data sources indicated that the main cause of absence during menstruation was due to pain and discomfort, and fear of leakage. The research revealed that it was after their first period that girls missed the most days of school.

The WinS programme has made a significant and positive contribution to girls in the Bajura district where gender segregated toilets had been built with a good and regular water supply. The girls in this district were using reusable sanitary pads and were less worried about leakage as a result. However, more could be done to provide girls with comfortable, secure menstrual management materials, that they are able to dispose of with confidence, particularly in Parsa and Achham.

Schools were an important source of information about menstruation for both girls and boys. More support to teachers and schools would be beneficial to enable them to provide accurate information about materials, symptoms and causes of menstruation in an understandable manner. It is also important that the menstrual management information reaches the girls before the onset of their menarche, therefore a review of when (what class/grade) the Menstrual Hygiene Management classes and Sexual and Reproductive Health classes are taught is required. These may need to be reviewed and taught sooner, in lower classes/grades. Segregating teaching of sexual and reproductive health classes by gender (teachers and students) would be also beneficial, allowing girls to feel

more comfortable in a single sex setting in order to ask questions and explore issues. Age appropriate teaching of menstrual management is recommended and schools could explore collaborating with local health facilities where nurses could help teach menstrual management related classes to girls.

Girls appreciated infrastructure improvements but it is important that they are sustained and maintained so that girls can rely on having access to these facilities and products. The research found that at times toilets were unavailable to the students due to lack of water, being cleaned or maintained. Schools also needed to ensure that they can maintain the facilities – ensuring that there is an adequate water supply, supplies are replaced – including soap, the toilets are maintained and are accessible. The toilets also need to provide adequate privacy. The schools need to ensure that their supplies of sanitary items, including pain medications are checked and re-stocked and that there is a clear policy understood by the students, teachers, schools and parents and wider community.

Concerted efforts to address menstrual restrictions by schools and communities were appreciated and practices were slowly changing. Girls told us that the main reasons that they practiced or observed these restrictions were because of their family and only a few of the practices were actually being 'kept up'. Those practices around visiting temples or worshipping were followed because girls feared divine retribution, either for themselves or for their families. This indicates that there is opportunity for generational change and the need for further interventions to focus on older generations.



Characteristics	Parsa Participants				Bajura Participants				Achham Participants			
	FGD (N=2)	GI (N=4)	Mother (N=2)	Teacher (N=2)	FGD (N=2)	GI (N=4)	Mother (N=2)	Teacher (N=2)	FGD (N=2)	GI (N=4)	Mother (N=2)	Teacher (N=2)
Madeshhi	7	5	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Terai Dalit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Terai Janajati	2	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Muslim	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hill Dalit	1	-	-	1	3	1	-	-	3	1	-	-
Others (Thakuri, Sanyasi)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1
Total participants	13	8	2	-	12	8	2	2	12	8	2	2
Class	9,10	9	-	-	10	9,10	-	-	10	8,9	-	-
Mean Age	15	14	39	31	15	15	-	-	15	14	-	36
N=Total number of event												

Table 3. Data collected

	Methodology and Method	N units of data	Total number of participants
<b>Qualitative</b>			
Group interviews with girls		12 (Groups)	24
Focus group discussion with girls		6	37
Semi structured interview (SSI) with Health teacher		6	6
Semi structured interview (SSI) with Mothers		6	6
<b>Total qualitative data</b>		<b>30</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Quantitative</b>			
Observation		12	

Methodology and Method	N units of data	Total number of participants
Structured interview girls	600 (~50 per school)	600
Self-Completed Diary	600	600
Structured interview boys	180(15 per school)	180
Semi structured interview (SSI) with Head Teachers	12	12
<b>Total quantitative data</b>	<b>1404</b>	<b>792</b>

\*same participants for structured interview and self-completed diary

Table 4. Support for WASH in schools

Support	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	Wins	N-wins	Wins	N-wins	Wins	N-wins	Wins	N-wins
	N=2	N=2	N=2	N=2	N=2	N=2	N=6	N=6
School has WASH in the school improvement plan	0	2	1	0	2	1	3	3
School has a fund to manage the cleanliness of the compound and toilet	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
School received support to teach menstruation related education	2	1	2	0	2	1	6	2
Types of support	N=2	n=1	N=2	n=0	n=2	n=1	N=6	n=2
WinS training	1	0	2	0	2	0	5	0
Training on making re-usable sanitary pad	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	2
Menstrual hygiene was included in the WASH training	2	1	2	0	2	1	6	2
Source of the support								
District Education Office	2	0	1	0	0	0	3	0
Red Cross	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1



Support	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	Wins	N-wins	Wins	N-wins	Wins	N-wins	Wins	N-wins
	N=2	N=2	N=2	N=2	N=2	N=2	N=6	N=6
Drinking Water and Sanitation Committee	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Women Development Committee	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
District WASH Community Committee	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
Beyond Nepal	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
UNICEF	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0

Table 5. Menstrual education and Facilities provided by schools to manage menstruation at school

Menstrual education and Facilities	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	Wins	N-WinS	Wins	N-WinS	Wins	N-WinS	Wins	N-WinS
	N=2	N=2	N=2	N=2	N=2	N=2	N=6	N=6
How do girls receive menstruation related education at school?								
As part of the curriculum	2	2	2	2	2	2	6	6
As part of a specific training	0	0	0	1	2	0	2	1
From NGOS	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
From Health workers	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
From Extra-Curricular Activities	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
Friends	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Who teaches menstruation related curriculum at school?								
Teachers	2	2	2	2	2	2	6	6
Health workers	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
<b>Facilities provided by schools to make girls feel more comfortable to manage their menstruation</b>								
Education	1	2	2	2	2	1	5	5
Medicine (painkillers) and/or hot water bags	1	0	1	1	0	0	2	1

Menstrual education and Facilities	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	Wins	N-WinS	Wins	N-WinS	Wins	N-WinS	Wins	N-WinS
	N=2	N=2	N=2	N=2	N=2	N=2	N=6	N=6
Changing room	1	0	0	0	2	0	3	0
Giving sanitary pad training to girls	0	0	0	1	2	0	2	1
Waste disposal facility	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	0
No services provided	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
Available sanitary pads (or equivalent materials) for girls at school on a regular basis	2	0	0	0	2	1	4	1
Available sanitary napkins for girls at the school in an emergency	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0

Table 6. Socio-demographic characteristics of girls

Characteristics	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	Wins	N-WinS	Wins	N-WinS	Wins	N-WinS	Wins	N-WinS
	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=300	N=300	N=300	N=300
<b>Mean age</b>	<b>15</b>		<b>15</b>		<b>14</b>		<b>14.6</b>	
<b>Ethnicity</b>								
Dalit	26 (26)	22 (22)	17 (17.0)	18(18)	6 (6.0)	6 (6.0)	49 (16.3)	46 (15.3)
Janajati	1 (1.0)	2 (2.0)	0 (.0)	3 (3)	1 (1.0)	1 (1.0)	28 (9.3)	6 (2.0)
Madhesi	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	89 (89)	89 (89)	51 (17)	89 (29.7)
Brahmin/Chettri	69 (69)	59 (59)	77 (77)	79(79)	0 (0)	0 (0)	155 (51.7)	138 (46)
Sanyasi/ Thakuri	4 (4.0)	17 (17)	6 (6)	0 (.0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	10 (3.3)	17 (5.7)
Others	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	4 (4.0)	4 (4.0)	7 (2.3)	4 (1.3)
<b>Religion</b>								

Characteristics	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	W/inS	N-W/inS	W/inS	N-W/inS	W/inS	N-W/inS	W/inS	N-W/inS
	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=300	N=300
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
<b>Mean age</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14.6</b>			
Hindu	100 (100)	100(100)	100(100)	99(99)	90 (90.0)	97 (97)	290 (96.7)	296 (99)
Muslim	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	7 (7.0)	3 (3.0)	7 (2.3)	3 (1.0)
Christian	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (1)	3 (3)	0 (0)	3 (1.0)	1 (.3)
<b>Primary language</b>								
Nepali	100 (100)	100 (100)	13 (13.0)	4 (4.0)	14 (14.0)	0 (0)	127 (42.3)	104(35)
Bhojpuri	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	82 (82.0)	100 (100)	82 (27.3)	100 (33)
Doteli	0 (0)	0 (0)	87 (87)	96(96)	0 (0)	0 (0)	87 (29.0)	96 (32)
Others	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4 (4.0)	0 (0)	4 (1.3)	0 (0)
<b>Describe themselves as disabled</b>	9 (9.0)	7 (7.0)	4 (4.0)	8 (8.0)	20 (20.0)	10 (10)	33 (11.0)	25 (8.3)
<b>Education level of mother</b>								
None	86 (86)	80 (80.0)	85 (85.0)	88 (88)	67 (67.0)	61 (61.0)	238 (79.3)	229 (76.3)
Below class 10	12 (12.0)	18 (18.0)	14 (14.0)	11 (11)	30 (30.0)	34 (34.0)	56 (18.7)	63 (21.0)
Class 10 and above	1 (1.0)	0 (0)	1 (1.0)	1 (1.0)	2 (2.0)	5 (5.0)	4 (1.3)	6 (2.0)
University	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Don't know	1 (1.0)	2 (2.0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (1.0)	0 (0)	2 (.7)	2 (.7)
<b>Education level of father</b>								
None	26 (26)	28 (28.0)	30 (30.0)	40 (40)	27 (27.0)	23 (23.0)	83 (27.7)	91 (30.3)
Below class 10	57 (57)	59 (59.0)	62 (62.0)	39 (39)	51 (51.0)	38 (38.0)	170 (56.7)	136 (45.3)
Class 10 and above	12 (12)	10 (10.0)	6 (6.0)	19 (19)	15 (15.0)	37 (37.0)	33 (11.0)	66 (22.0)
University	2 (2.0)	0 (0)	1 (1.0)	1 (1.0)	1 (1.0)	2 (2.0)	4 (1.3)	3 (1.0)
Don't know	3 (3.0)	3 (3.0)	1 (1.0)	1 (1.0)	6 (6.0)	0 (0)	10 (3.3)	4 (1.3)
<b>Wealth index</b>								

Characteristics	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	Wins	N-Wins	Wins	N-Wins	Wins	N-Wins	Wins	N-Wins
	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=300	N=300
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
<b>Mean age</b>	<b>15</b>		<b>15</b>		<b>14</b>		<b>14.6</b>	
Low	29 (29)	13 (13.0)	19 (19.0)	34 (34)	18 (18.0)	30 (30.0)	66 (22.0)	77 (25.7)
Medium	66 (66)	82 (82.0)	71 (71.0)	63 (63)	56 (56.0)	47 (47.0)	193 (64.3)	192 (64.0)
High	5 (5)	5 (5.0)	10 (10.0)	3 (3.0)	26 (26.0)	23 (23.0)	41 (13.7)	31 (10.3)
<b>How has the earthquake affected your home?</b>								
No effect of earthquake	99 (99)	100(100)	97 (97.0)	97 (97)	82 (82.0)	83 (83.0)	278 (92.7)	280 (93.3)
Minor cracks to home	1 (1)	0 (0)	3 (3.0)	3 (3.0)	16 (16.0)	14 (14.0)	20 (6.7)	17 (5.7)
Major damage to home	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (2.0)	3 (3.0)	2 (0.7)	3 (1.0)

Table 7. Socio-demographic characteristics of boys

Characteristics	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	Wins	N-Wins	Wins	N-Wins	Wins	N-Wins	Wins	N-Wins
	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=90)	(N=90)
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
Mean Age of Boys	14	15	15	14	14	14	14	14
<b>Caste/Ethnicity</b>								
Brahmin/Chettri	18 (60)	24 (80.0)	20 (66.7)	23 (76.7)	4 (13.3)	0 (0)	42 (46.7)	47 (52.2)
Dalit	12 (40)	6 (20)	10 (33.3)	7 (23.3)	3 (10)	2 (6.7)	25 (27.8)	15 (16.7)
Madhesi	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	11 (36.7)	24 (80)	11 (12.2)	24 (26.7)
Muslim	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	7 (23.3)	4 (13.3)	7 (7.8)	4 (4.4)
Terai Janajati	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	5 (16.7)	0 (0)	5 (5.6)	0 (0)
<b>Religion</b>								
Hindu	30 (100)	30 (100)	27 (90)	30 (100)	23 (76.7)	26 (86.7)	80 (88.9)	86 (95.6)

Characteristics	Achham		Bajura		Parasa		Total	
	WinS	N-Wins	WinS	N-Wins	WinS	N-Wins	WinS	N-Wins
	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=90)	(N=90)
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
Mean Age of Boys	14	15	15	14	14	14	14	14
Muslim (Islam)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	7 (23.3)	3 (10)	7 (7.8)	3 (3.3)
Christian	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (6.7)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (3.3)	2 (2.2)	1 (1.1)
Buddhist	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (3.3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (1.1)	0 (0)
<b>Primary language</b>								
Nepali	30 (100)	30 (100)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (10)	0 (0)	33 (36.7)	30 (33.3)
Doteli	0 (0)	0 (0)	30 (100)	30 (100)	0 (0)	0 (0)	30 (33.3)	30 (33.3)
Bhojpuri	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	24 (80)	30 (100)	24 (26.7)	30 (33.3)
Hindi	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (10)	0 (0)	3 (3.3)	0 (0)
<b>Disabled</b>	2 (6.7)	4 (13.3)	3 (10)	0 (0)	2 (6.7)	0 (0)	7 (7.8)	4 (4.4)
<b>Education level of mother</b>								
None	26 (86.7)	25 (83.3)	27 (90)	28 (93.3)	19 (63.3)	18 (60)	72 (80.0)	71 (78.9)
Below class 10	3 (10)	4 (13.3)	2 (6.7)	2 (6.7)	9 (30)	11 (36.7)	14 (15.6)	17 (18.9)
Class 10 and above	1 (3.3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (3.3)	0 (0)	2 (2.2)	0 (0)
Don't know	0 (0)	1 (3.3)	1 (3.3)	0 (0)	1 (3.3)	1 (3.3)	2 (2.2)	2 (2.2)
<b>Education level of father</b>								
None	8 (26.7)	9 (30)	9 (30)	12 (40)	11 (36.7)	4 (13.3)	28 (31.1)	25 (27.8)
Below class 10	9 (30.0)	16 (53.3)	17 (56.7)	13 (43.3)	16 (53.3)	21 (70)	42 (46.7)	50 (55.6)
Class 10 and above	10 (33.3)	3 (10.0)	3 (10.0)	4 (13.3)	3 (10.0)	4 (13.3)	16 (17.8)	11 (12.2)
University	3 (10)	1 (3.3)	1 (3.3)	1 (3.3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4 (4.4)	2 (2.2)
Don't know	0 (0)	1 (3.3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (3.3)	0 (0)	2 (2.2)
<b>Wealth Index</b>								
Low	7 (23.3)	3 (10.0)	3 (10.0)	13 (43.3)	7 (23.3)	6 (20.0)	17 (18.9)	22 (24.4)
Medium	21 (70.0)	24 (80.0)	23 (76.7)	17 (56.7)	19 (63.3)	17 (56.7)	63 (70.0)	58 (64.4)
High	2 (6.7)	3 (10.0)	4 (13.3)	0 (0)	4 (13.3)	7 (23.3)	10 (11.1)	10 (11.1)

Table 8. Knowledge of Menstruation

	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	Total
	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=300	N=300	
<b>Know about menstruation before men- arche</b>	22 (22.0)	17 (17.0)	27 (27.0)	18 (18.0)	24 (24.0)	16 (16.0)	73 (24.3)	51 (17.0)
<b>Source of information*</b>	<b>n=22</b>	<b>n=17</b>	<b>n=27</b>	<b>n=18</b>	<b>n=24</b>	<b>n=16</b>	<b>n=73</b>	<b>n=51</b>
Mother	10 (45.5)	10 (58.8)	13 (48.1)	10 (55.6)	14 (58.3)	13 (81.3)	37 (50.7)	33 (64.7)
Older Sister	11 (50.0)	6 (35.3)	14 (51.9)	9 (50.0)	11 (45.8)	8 (50.0)	36 (49.3)	23 (45.1)
Friend	11 (50.0)	3 (17.6)	18 (66.7)	9 (50.0)	10 (41.7)	2 (12.5)	39 (53.4)	14 (27.5)
Teacher	5 (22.7)	0 (.0)	9 (33.3)	3 (16.7)	6 (25.0)	1 (6.3)	20 (27.4)	4 (7.8)
Older Sister in law	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	2 (7.4)	4 (22.2)	2 (8.3)	0 (.0)	4 (5.5)	4 (7.8)
Book/magazine	1 (4.5)	1 (5.9)	2 (7.4)	2 (11.1)	3 (12.5)	0 (.0)	6 (8.2)	3 (5.9)
Others	4 (18.2)	2 (11.8)	5 (18.5)	2 (11.1)	2 (8.3)	0 (.0)	11 (15.1)	4 (7.8)
* Percentage may exceed 100 due to multiple response								
<b>Information was useful</b>	20 (90.9)	16 (94.1)	26 (96.3)	18 (100)	24 (100)	16 (100)	70 (95.9)	50 (98.0)
<b>When you first started menstruating, what did you believe was the cause of your menstruation?</b>								
	<b>N=100</b>	<b>N=100</b>	<b>N=100</b>	<b>N=100</b>	<b>N=100</b>	<b>N=100</b>	<b>N=300</b>	<b>N=300</b>
Normal healthy process	35 (35.0)	27 (27.0)	23 (23.0)	14 (14.0)	4 (4.0)	6 (6.0)	62 (20.7)	47 (15.7)
Any type of illness	11 (11.0)	10 (10.0)	12 (12.0)	9 (9.0)	7 (7.0)	10 (10.0)	30 (10.0)	29 (9.7)
Bad blood being shed	9 (9.0)	6 (6.0)	8 (8.0)	2 (2.0)	2 (2.0)	2 (2.0)	19 (6.3)	10 (3.3)
Internal bleeding	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	5 (5.0)	7 (7.0)	1 (1.0)	2 (2.0)	6 (2.0)	9 (3.0)
Others	2 (2.0)	2 (2.0)	1 (1.0)	0 (.0)	10 (10.0)	4 (4.0)	13 (4.3)	6 (2.0)
Don't know	43 (43.0)	55 (55.0)	51 (51.0)	68 (68.0)	76 (76.0)	76 (76.0)	170 (56.7)	199 (66.3)
<b>Now, what do you believe is the cause of your menstruation?</b>								
Normal healthy processes	67 (67.0)	64 (64.0)	68 (68.0)	62 (62.0)	32 (32.0)	19 (19.0)	167 (55.7)	145 (48.3)

WinS N=100	Achham		Bajura		Parasa		Total	
	N-WinS N=100	WinS N=100	N-WinS N=100	WinS N=100	N-WinS N=300	WinS N=300	N-WinS N=300	Total
Bad blood being shed	27 (27.0)	20 (20.0)	9 (9.0)	5 (5.0)	6 (6.0)	9 (9.0)	42 (14.0)	34 (11.3)
Supernatural reason	0 (.0)	1 (1.0)	1 (1.0)	0 (.0)	3 (3.0)	8 (8.0)	4 (1.3)	9 (3.0)
To give birth	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	8 (8.0)	4 (4.0)	8 (2.7)	4 (1.3)
Others	0 (.0)	2 (2.0)	1 (1.0)	2 (2.0)	5 (5.0)	6 (6.0)	6 (2.0)	10 (3.3)
Don't know	6 (6.0)	13 (13.0)	21 (21.0)	31 (31.0)	46 (46.0)	54 (54.0)	73 (24.3)	98 (32.7)
<b>Received more information about menstruation</b>	66 (66.0)	48 (48.0)	77 (77.0)	74 (74.0)	85 (85.0)	82 (82.0)	228 (76)	204 (68)
<b>Source of additional information from*</b>	<b>n=66</b>	<b>n=48</b>	<b>n=77</b>	<b>n=74</b>	<b>n=85</b>	<b>n=82</b>	<b>n=228</b>	<b>n=204</b>
Mother	33 (50.0)	24 (50.0)	32 (41.6)	31 (41.9)	55 (64.7)	74 (90.2)	120 (52.6)	129 (63.2)
Older Sister	24 (36.4)	18 (37.5)	33 (42.9)	34 (45.9)	27 (31.8)	38 (46.3)	84 (36.8)	90 (44.1)
Older Sister in law	10 (15.2)	3 (6.3)	8 (10.4)	16 (21.6)	9 (10.6)	9 (11.0)	27 (11.8)	28 (13.7)
female relative	7 (10.6)	2 (4.2)	8 (10.4)	6 (8.1)	8 (9.4)	10 (12.2)	23 (10.1)	18 (8.8)
Friend	41 (62.1)	25 (52.1)	57 (74.0)	57 (77.0)	43 (50.6)	35 (42.7)	141 (61.8)	117 (57.4)
Teacher	54 (81.8)	26 (54.2)	64 (83.1)	61 (82.4)	60 (70.6)	39 (47.6)	178 (78.1)	126 (61.8)
Book/magazine	23 (34.8)	4 (8.3)	61 (79.2)	59 (79.7)	10 (11.8)	2 (2.4)	94 (41.2)	65 (31.9)
Radio	5 (7.6)	4 (8.3)	17 (22.1)	13 (17.6)	1 (1.2)	0 (.0)	23 (10.1)	17 (8.3)
Child club/Young Champion	3 (4.5)	1 (2.1)	18 (23.4)	3 (4.1)	4 (4.7)	0 (.0)	25 (11.0)	4 (2.0)
Others	3 (4.5)	5 (10.4)	7 (9.1)	2 (2.7)	3 (3.5)	2 (2.4)	13 (5.7)	9 (4.4)

\* Percentage may exceed 100 due to multiple response

Table 9. Social Taboos and their reasons by WinS schools and non-WinS schools

Restrictions	Achham (WinS)										
	Reasons for restriction										
	Girls (N=200)	Don't feel well	Divine retribution	Family don't allow you	Don't want to	Make the people you touch unwell	Spoil the food	Food/ drink will make you feel unwell	Heavy bleedings	Difficult to lift load	Others
n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	
Cannot visit religious place	100(100.0)	0(0)	47(47.0)	52(52.0)	1(1.0)						0(0)
Cannot attend religious occasion	95(95.0)	0(0)	39(41.1)	56(58.9)	0(0)						0(0)
Cannot do household puja (blessing)	99(99.0)	0(0)	53(53.5)	43(43.4)	2(2.0)						1(1.0)
Cannot touch male family members	58(58.0)		0(0)	24(41.4)	0(0)	32(55.2)					2(3.4)
Cannot cook food or enter inside kitchen	95(95.0)	2(2.1)	2(2.1)	69(72.6)	0(0)		20(21.1)				2(2.1)
Cannot go outside as much as normal	31(31.0)	3(9.7)	1(3.2)	25(80.6)	1(3.2)						1(3.2)
Cannot eat any foods or drinks of their choice	75(75.0)		3(4.0)	42(56.0)	0(0)			25(33.3)	1(1.3)		4(5.3)
Cannot sleep in the same household as others	60(60.0)	0(0)	7(11.7)	53(88.3)							0(0)
Cannot sleep in the same bed as others	50(50.0)	0(0)	4(8.0)	36(72.0)	6(12.0)						4(8.0)
Cannot lift heavy loads	55(55.0)	5(9.1)		15(27.3)	3(5.5)					28(50.9)	4(7.3)



Table 10. Social Taboos and their reasons by Wins and non-WinS

Restrictions	Achham (Non-WinS)										
	Reasons for restriction										
	Girls (N=200)	n (%)	Don't feel well	Divine retribution	Family don't allow you	Don't want to touch you	Spoil the food	Food/drink will make you feel unwell	Difficult to lift load	Till now not necessary to lift heavy loads	Others
Cannot visit religious place	100(100.0)	1(1.0)	31(31.0)	68(68.0)	0(0)						0(0)
Cannot attend religious occasion	96(96.0)	1(1.0)	26(27.1)	69(71.9)	0(0)						0(0)
Cannot do household puja (blessing)	100(100.0)	0(0)	36(36.0)	60(60.0)	0(0)						4(4.0)
Cannot touch male family members	61(61.0)		1(1.6)	14(23.0)	0(0)	45(73.8)					1(1.6)
Cannot cook food or enter inside kitchen	96(96.0)	2(2.1)	4(4.2)	68(70.8)	0(0)		21(21.9)				1(1.0)
Cannot go outside as much as normal	27(27.0)	5(18.5)	0(0)	16(59.3)	3(11.1)						3(11.1)
Cannot eat any foods or drinks of their choice	84(84.0)		3(3.6)	52(61.9)	0(0)		23(27.4)				6(7.1)
Cannot sleep in the same household as others	60(60.0)	2(3.3)	5(8.3)	48(80.0)							5(8.3)
Cannot sleep in the same bed as others	44(44.0)	0(0)	1(2.3)	34(77.3)	7(15.9)						2(4.5)
Cannot lift heavy loads	55(55.0)	5(9.1)		20(36.4)	4(7.3)			18(32.7)	4(7.3)		4(7.3)

Table 11. Social Taboos and their reasons by Wins and non-WinS

Restrictions	Bajura (WinS)										
	Reasons for restriction										
	Girls (N=200)	Don't feel well	Divine retribution	Family don't allow you	Don't want to	Make the people you touch unwell	Spoil the food	Food/ drink will make you feel unwell	Difficult to lift load	Others	
n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	
Cannot visit religious place	100(100.0)	1(1.0)	80(80.0)	15(15.0)	0(0)					4(4.0)	
Cannot attend religious occasion	85(85.0)	0(0)	56(65.9)	25(29.4)	0(0)					4(4.7)	
Cannot do household puja (blessing)	100(100.0)	1(1.0)	80(80.0)	15(15.0)	0(0)					4(4.0)	
Cannot touch male family members	62(62.0)		7(11.3)	29(46.8)	0(0)	26(41.9)				0(0)	
Cannot cook food or enter inside kitchen	98(98.0)	13(13.3)	13(13.3)	65(66.3)	0(0)				5(5.1)	2(2.0)	
Cannot go outside as much as normal	19(19.0)	1(5.3)	4(21.1)	9(47.4)	5(26.3)					0(0)	
Cannot eat any foods or drinks of their choice	88(88.0)		17(19.3)	62(70.5)	1(1.1)			2(2.3)		6(6.8)	
Cannot sleep in the same household as others	23(23.0)	0(0)	5(21.7)	17(73.9)						1(4.3)	
Cannot sleep in the same bed as others	80(80.0)	2(2.5)	9(11.3)	62(77.5)	2(2.5)					5(6.3)	
Cannot lift the heavy loads	54(54.0)	11(20.4)		11(20.4)	0(0)					29(53.7)	

Table 12. Social Taboos and their reasons by Wins and non-WinS

Restrictions	Bajura (N-WinS)									
	Reasons for restriction									
	Girls (N=200)	Don't feel well	Divine retribution	Family don't allow you	Don't want to touch you	make the people you touch unwell	Spoil the food	Food/drink will make you feel unwell	Difficult to lift load	Till now not necessary to lift heavy loads
n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Cannot visit religious place	98(98)	1(1.)	78(79.6)	14(14.3)	0(0)					5(5.1)
Cannot attend religious occasion	87(87)	0(0)	55(63.2)	29(33.3)	0(0)					3(3.4)
Cannot do household puja (blessing)	98(98)	0(0)	77(78.6)	18(18.4)	0(0)					3(3.1)
Cannot touch male family members	61(61)		15(24.6)	21(34.4)	0(0)	25(41.0)				0(0)
Cannot cook food or enter inside kitchen	97(97)	6(6.2)	30(30.9)	56(57.7)	0(0)		5(5.2)			0(0)
Cannot go outside as much as normal	27(27)	0(0)	12(44.4)	15(55.6)	0(0)					0(0)
Cannot eat any foods or drinks of their choice	91(91)		33(36.3)	54(59.3)	0(0)			1(1.1)		3(3.3)
Cannot sleep in the same household as others	11(11)	0(0)	3(27.3)	8(72.7)						0(0)
Cannot sleep in the same bed as others	85(85)	2(2.4)	25(29.4)	55(64.7)	0(0)					3(3.5)
Cannot lift the heavy loads	32(32)	7(22)		4(12.5)	0(0)				17(53.1)	2(6.3)

Table 13. Social Taboos and their reasons by Wins and non-Wins

Restrictions	Parsa (WinS)											
	Reasons for restriction											
	Girls (N=200)	n (%)	Don't feel well	Divine retribution	Family don't allow you	Don't want to	make the people you touch unwell	Spoil the food	Food/drink will make you feel unwell	Heavy bleedings	Difficult to lift load	Others
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Cannot visit religious place	96(96.0)	0(.0)	44(45.8)	51(53.1)	1(1.0)							0(.0)
Cannot attend religious occasion	61(61.0)	2(3.3)	33(54.1)	22(36.1)	3(4.9)							1(1.6)
Cannot do household puja (blessing)	96(96.0)	0(.0)	43(44.8)	52(54.2)	1(1.0)							0(.0)
Cannot touch male family members	13(13.0)		4(30.8)	6(46.2)	1(7.7)	1(7.7)						1(7.7)
Cannot cook food or enter inside kitchen	27(27.0)	1(3.7)	2(7.4)	19(70.4)	2(7.4)			2(7.4)				1(3.7)
Cannot go outside as much as normal	6(6.0)	2(33.3)	0(.0)	1(16.7)	3(50.0)							0(.0)
Cannot eat any foods or drinks of their choice	46(46.0)		0(.0)	6(13.0)	3(6.5)				9(19.6)	28(60.9)		0(.0)
Cannot sleep in the same household as others	0(.0)	0(.0)	0(.0)	0(.0)	0(.0)							0(.0)
Cannot sleep in the same bed as others	7(7.0)	0(.0)	0(.0)	6(85.7)	1(14.3)							0(.0)
Cannot lift the heavy loads	55(55.0)	22(40.0)		19(34.5)	2(3.6)						10(18.2)	2(3.6)

Table 14. Social Taboos and their reasons by Wins and non-WinS

Restrictions	Parsa (N-WinS)									
	Reasons for restriction									
	Girls (N=200)	Don't feel well	Divine retribution	Family don't allow you	Don't want to	make the people you touch unwell	Food/drink will make you feel unwell	Heavy bleedings	Difficult to lift load	Others
n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	
Cannot visit religious place	98(98.0)	0(0)	46(46.9)	52(53.1)	0(0)					0(0)
Cannot attend religious occasion	60(60.0)	1(1.7)	27(45.0)	28(46.7)	3(5.0)					1(1.7)
Cannot do household puja (blessing)	99(99.0)	0(0)	39(39.4)	60(60.6)	0(0)					0(0)
Cannot touch male family members	19(19.0)		2(10.5)	14(73.7)	2(10.5)	1(5.3)				0(0)
Cannot cook food or enter inside kitchen	28(28.0)	0(0)	3(10.7)	24(85.7)	0(0)					1(3.6)
Cannot go outside as much as normal	6(6.0)	3(50.0)	0(0)	1(16.7)	2(33.3)					0(0)
Cannot eat any foods or drinks of their choice	48(48.0)		0(0)	6(12.5)	4(8.3)		2(4.2)	36(75.0)		0(0)
Cannot sleep in the same household as others	1(1.0)	0(0)	0(0)	1(100.0)	0(0)					0(0)
Cannot sleep in the same bed as others	4(4.0)	0(0)	0(0)	4(100.0)	0(0)					0(0)
Cannot lift the heavy loads	54(54.0)	22(40.7)		14(25.9)	11(20.4)				6(11.1)	1(1.9)

Table 15. Old and existing restriction in each district from qualitative data

Achham		Bajura		Parsa	
Old restrictions	Existing restrictions	Old restrictions	Existing restrictions	Old restrictions	Existing restrictions
Not allowed to stay at home /construct shed nearby home and stay there	Some families allow girl to stay at home	Girls must paint the floor daily during menstruation	-	Not allowed to touch water tap	Everything can be touched and utensils can be cleaned
Not allowed going in front yard	Allowed to go in the front yard	Wet utensils are kept outside the house for 4 days	Allowed to keep utensils inside after they are dry	Not allowed to touch male family members	Not allowed to touch male family members in some family
Not allowed to use toilet	Allowed to use public toilet	Not allowed to use the toilet	Use the toilet by hiding from elder people in the family	Not allowed to workshop or enter the temple	Not allowed to worship or enter the temple
Not allowed to wash cloths and also bathe at a tap	Allow to bathe at a public tap	Stay in a separate house or shed	Stay in the same house as others and stay in own room but sleep separately from others	Not allowed to touch anything must sit quietly at the side	-
Not allowed to go upstairs in house and use <i>chulo</i> (clay stove)	-	Not allowed to touch male family members	Not allowed to touch male family members	Not allowed to sit together with other people	Allowed to touch others and sit together if they bath daily
Allowed home on 7th day of menstruation	Allowed home on 5th day of menstruation	Girls not allowed to go to school or touch text books	Girls are going to school and touching text books	Others not allowed to eat food cooked by menstruating woman	Allowed to eat food cooked by menstruating woman
Not allowed to have milk, yogurt, and ghee of cattle	Allowed to have milk, yogurt and ghee of cattle	Not allowed to worship god or enter temple	Not allowed to worship god or enter temple	Wash all clothes and clean house after menstruation stopped	No need to wash and clean everything after menstruation stopped
Not allowed to enter temple/ worship god	Not allowed to enter temple/ worship god	Breastfeeding child should be naked before feeding so that the child's clothes are not touched by menstruating mother	Mother feed their child as normal	Not allowed to cook or have to cook separately for yourself during menstruation	-
Not allowed to walk in the same path as others	Allowed to walk the same path as others	Not allowed to have yogurt or milk	Not allowed to have yogurt or milk	Not allowed to touch pickle	Allowed to touch pickle

Achham		Bajura		Parsa	
Old restrictions	Existing restrictions	Old restrictions	Existing restrictions	Old restrictions	Existing restrictions
Not allowed to touch other people	Stay in one of the rooms within the house	Not allowed to walk the same path as others	Not allowed to walk the same path as others	Hide menstrual clothes in corners to dry	Dry menstrual cloths in sunlight
Not allowed to light a fire	Allowed to light a fire as per need	Girls go to school without combing hair	Girls go to school with combed hair	Not allowed to sleep in the same bed as others	Allowed to sleep together in a same bed as other family members
Not allowed to enter in the kitchen	Not allowed to enter the kitchen	Not allowed to enter the kitchen	Not allowed enter the kitchen	Stay alone, and eat alone, outside in a separate room for 4-5 days	-
Not allowed to touch male family members	-	Not allowed to walk in the same path as others	-	-	-
Allowed to cook food when they are alone	Allowed to do household work if they live in a nuclear family, but those who are in an extended family are not allowed to do any household work	Wet utensils are kept outside the house for 4 days	-	-	-
Not allowed to go to school					

Table 16. Boys' current knowledge and experience of menstruation

Knowledge	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	WinS	N-Wins	WinS	N-Wins	WinS	N-Wins	WinS	N-Wins
	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=90)	(N=90)
Heard about menstruation	22 (73.3)	22 (73.3)	30 (100)	26 (86.7)	21 (70)	24 (80)	73 (81.1)	72 (80.0)
Have female members aged 12 to 60	30 (100)	29 (96.7)	28 (93.3)	29 (96.7)	30 (100)	30 (100)	88(97.8)	88 (97.8)
If yes, how do you know they are menstruating?								
	(n=30)	(n=29)	(n=28)	(n=29)	(n=30)	(n=30)	(n=88)	(n=88)
Restriction at home	19 (63.3)	18 (62.1)	27 (96.4)	29 (100)	15 (50)	14 (46.7)	61(69.3)	61 (69.3)
When they dry used cloths	8 (26.7)	6 (20.7)	1 (3.6)	0 (0)	2 (6.7)	4 (13.3)	11 (12.5)	10 (11.4)
When they have stomach pain	1 (3.3)	1 (3.4)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (10)	8 (26.7)	4(4.5)	9(10.2)
Tell themselves	1 (3.3)	1 (3.4)	0 (0)	0 (0)	7 (23.3)	3 (10)	8(9.1)	4(4.5)
Others (Leakage, do not go to temples or do religious activities)	1 (3.3)	3 (10.3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (10.0)	1 (3.3)	4(4.5)	4(4.5)
	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=90)	(N=90)
Feel able to buy sanitary pads if a friend or family member needed them	14 (46.7)	22 (73.3)	23 (76.7)	27 (90)	29 (96.7)	24 (80)	66 (73.3)	73 (81.1)
Helped a family member or a female friend to manage their menstruation	13 (43.3)	14 (46.7)	28 (93.3)	16 (53.3)	11 (36.7)	1 (3.3)	52 (57.8)	31 (34.4)
Talked to other family members about menstruation	7 (23.3)	10 (33.3)	18 (60)	4 (13.3)	0 (0)	3 (10)	25 (27.8)	17 (18.9)



Table 17. Boys' Attitude towards menstruation

Attitude	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	Wins (N=30)	N-Wins (N=30)	Wins (N=30)	N-Wins (N=30)	Wins (N=30)	N-Wins (N=30)	Wins (N=90)	N-Wins (N=90)
	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)
Cause of menstruation								
Normal healthy process	9(30.0)	16(41.7)	13 (43.3)	20 (55.0)	13 (43.3)	14 (46.7)	35(38.9)	50 (55.6)
Bad blood being shed	13 (43.3)	8(35.0)	14 (46.7)	7(35.0)	5(16.7)	1(3.3)	32(35.6)	16 (17.8)
Internal bleeding	7 (23.3)	6(21.7)	1(3.3)	3(6.7)	4(13.3)	6(20.0)	12(13.3)	15(16.7)
Curse	0 (.0)	0(0)	1(3.3)	0(1.7)	0(0)	2(6.7)	1(1.1)	2(2.2)
Others (Supernatural reason, due to increasing in age)	1 (3.3)	0(1.7)	1(3.3)	0(1.7)	1(3.3)	1(3.3)	3(3.3)	1(1.1)
Don't know	0 (.0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	7(23.3)	6(20.0)	7(7.8)	6(6.7)
Source of information								
Teacher	16 (53.3)	18(56.7)	23 (76.7)	16 (65.0)	18 (60.0)	29 (96.7)	57(63.3)	63 (70.0)
Female family members	7(23.3)	6(21.7)	1(3.3)	8(15.0)	4(13.3)	1(3.3)	12(13.3)	15 (16.7)
Health workers	6(20.0)	5(18.3)	2(6.7)	5(11.7)	1(3.3)	0(0)	9(10.0)	10 (11.1)
Friends	0(0)	1(1.7)	0(0)	0(0)	4(13.3)	0(0)	4(4.4)	1(1.1)
Child clubs/ Mentors/Young Champions	0(0)	0(0)	3(10.0)	1(6.7)	0(0)	0(0)	3(3.3)	1(1.1)
Others (radio/book)	1(3.3)	0(1.7)	1(3.3)	0(1.7)	3(10.0)	0(0)	5(5.6)	0(0)
How useful was this information?								
Useful	24 (80.0)	25(81.7)	28 (93.3)	24 (86.7)	25 (83.3)	29 (96.7)	77(85.6)	78 (86.7)
Not very useful	6(20.0)	5(18.3)	0(0)	5(8.3)	1(3.3)	1(3.3)	7(7.8)	11 (12.2)
No use at all	0(0)	0(0)	2(6.7)	1(5.0)	4(13.3)	0(0)	6(6.7)	1(1.1)

\* Percentage may exceed 100 due to multiple responses

Table 18. Boys' experience of sexual reproductive health and menstruation (SRHM) education

Experience	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS
	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=30)	(N=90)	(N=90)
Received a class on SRHM	19 (63.3)	23 (76.7)	30 (100)	30 (100)	27 (90)	30 (100)	76 (84.4)	83 (92.2)
Able to ask questions	15 (78.9)	18 (78.3)	29 (96.7)	21 (70)	17 (63)	24 (80)	61 (80.3)	63 (75.9)
<b>How do you find the class?</b>								
Interesting	18 (94.7)	19 (82.6)	28 (93.3)	25 (83.3)	14 (51.9)	20 (66.7)	60 (78.9)	64 (77.1)
Embarrassing	1 (5.3)	4 (17.4)	1 (3.3)	3 (10)	12 (44.4)	9 (30)	14 (18.4)	16 (19.3)
Others	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (3.3)	2 (6.7)	1 (3.7)	1 (3.3)	2 (2.6)	3 (3.6)
<b>How would you prefer to be taught this class?</b>								
Class not disaggregated by gender	17 (89.5)	16 (69.6)	28 (93.3)	20 (66.7)	18 (66.7)	20 (66.7)	63 (82.9)	56 (67.5)
Class disaggregated by gender	2 (10.5)	7 (30.4)	2 (6.7)	10 (33.3)	9 (33.3)	10 (33.3)	13 (17.1)	27 (32.5)

Table 19. Girls experience of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Menstruation (SRHM) education

Experience	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS
	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=300	N=300
Received a class SRHM	90 (90)	74 (74.0)	94 (94.0)	98 (98.0)	83 (83.0)	90 (90.0)	267 (89.0)	262 (87.3)
<b>Who taught this class?</b>	<b>n=90</b>	<b>n=74</b>	<b>n=94</b>	<b>n=98</b>	<b>n=83</b>	<b>n=90</b>	<b>n=267</b>	<b>n=262</b>
Health teacher	77 (85.6)	64 (86.5)	56 (59.6)	83 (84.7)	75 (90.4)	74 (82.2)	208 (77.9)	221 (84.4)
Other teacher	5(5.6)	7(9.5)	37 (39.4)	15 (15.3)	8(9.6)	16 (17.8)	50(18.7)	38(14.5)
Health worker	4(4.4)	2(2.7)	1(1.1)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	5(1.9)	2(.8)
Staffs from some NGOs	4(4.4)	1(1.4)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	4(1.5)	1(.4)

Experience	Achham			Bajura			Parsa			Total		
	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	WinS	N-WinS	N-WinS
	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=300	N=300	N=300	N=300
Were you able to ask questions?	29 (32.2)	16 (21.6)	22 (23.4)	24 (24.5)	38 (45.8)	25 (27.8)	89(33.3)	65(24.8)				
<b>How did you find this class?</b>												
Embarrassing	39 (43.3)	32 (43.2)	3(40.4)	55 (56.1)	33(39.8)	39 (43.3)	110 (41.2)	126 (48.1)				
Interesting	50 (55.6)	40 (54.1)	49 (52.1)	43 (43.9)	47 (56.6)	50 (55.6)	146(54.7)	133(50.8)				
Dull	1(1.1)	1(1.4)	2(2.1)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	3(1.1)	1(.4)				
Not useful	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	3(3.6)	1(1.1)	3(1.1)	1(.4)				
Good	0(0)	1(1.4)	2(2.1)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	2(.7)	1(.4)				
Very good	0(0)	0(0)	3(3.2)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	3(1.1)	0(0)				
<b>How would you prefer to be taught this class?</b>												
Class disaggregated by gender	31 (34.4)	30 (40.5)	44 (46.8)	55 (56.1)	29 (34.9)	26 (28.9)	104 (39.0)	111 (42.4)				
Class not disaggregated by gender	59 (65.6)	44 (59.5)	50 (53.2)	43 (43.9)	54 (65.1)	64 (71.1)	163 (61.0)	151 (57.6)				

Table 20. Menstrual Management

Management	Achham			Bajura			Parsa			Total		
	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	WinS	N-WinS	N-WinS
	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=300	N=300	N=300	N=300
Material usually used to manage menstruation												
Cloth (reusable)	94(94.0)	94 (94.0)	42 (42.0)	68 (68.0)	87(87.0)	87(87)	223(74.3)	249(83)				
Sanitary pads (disposable)	1(1.0)	1(1.0)	2(2.0)	4(4.0)	6(6.0)	13(13)	9(3.0)	18(6.0)				
Sanitary pads (reusable)	5(5.0)	1(1.0)	53 (53.0)	2(2.0)	7(7.0)	0(0)	65(21.7)	3(1.0)				

Management	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS
	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=300	N=300
Wears two or three trousers	0(0)	4(4.0)	0(0)	20(20.0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	24(8.0)
Other (nothing)	0(0)	0(0)	3(3.0)	6(6.0)	0(0)	0(0)	3(1.0)	6(2.0)
<b>If you could choose one thing, what would you like best to manage your menstruation</b>								
Cloth (reusable)	57(57.0)	66(66.0)	15 (15.0)	47(47.0)	46(46.0)	66(66)	118(39.3)	179 (59.7)
Sanitary pads (dis)	35(35.0)	31(31.0)	28 (28.0)	48(48.0)	39(39.0)	31(31)	102(34.0)	110 (36.7)
Sanitary pads (re)	8(8.0)	2(2.0)	56 (56.0)	4(4.0)	15(15.0)	3(3.0)	79(26.3)	9(3.0)
Nothing	0(0)	1(1.0)	1(1.0)	1(1.0)	0(0)	0(0)	1(.3)	2(.7)
<b>Shop within 20 minutes walking distance of home to buy sanitary pads</b>								
Yes	4(4.0)	0(0)	9(9.0)	9(9.0)	37(37.0)	16(16)	50(16.7)	25(8.3)
*Have ever used sanitary pads	23(23.0)	12(12.0)	18 (18.0)	13(13.0)	44(44.0)	39(39)	85(28.3)	64(21.3)
<b>How often do you use sanitary pads?</b>								
Always	0(0)	1(8.3)	4(22.2)	3(23.1)	5(11.4)	7(17.9)	9(10.6)	11(17.2)
Usually	1(4.3)	0(0)	2(11.1)	1(7.7)	1(2.3)	8(20.5)	4(4.7)	9(14.1)
Sometimes	11(47.8)	7(58.3)	3(16.7)	3(23.1)	19(43.2)	14(35.9)	33(38.8)	24(37.5)
Rarely	11(47.8)	4(33.3)	9(50.0)	6(46.2)	19(43.2)	10(25.6)	39(45.9)	20(31.3)
<b>How did you get them?</b>								
Self-bought	6(26.1)	3(25.0)	8(44.4)	3(23.1)	7(15.9)	4(10.3)	21(24.7)	10(15.6)
Relative bought	17(73.9)	8(66.7)	9(50.0)	10(76.9)	36(81.8)	35(89.7)	62(72.9)	53(82.8)
Others	0(0)	1(8.3)	1(5.6)	0(0)	1(2.3)	0(0)	2(2.4)	1(1.6)
<b>Where they were they from?</b>								
Retail shop	0(0)	0(0)	4(22.2)	1(7.7)	8(18.2)	7(17.9)	12(14.1)	8(12.5)
Bazaar (town) shop	22(95.7)	10(83.3)	12(66.7)	12(92.3)	27(61.4)	26(66.7)	61(71.8)	48(75.0)
Medical shop	1(4.3)	2(16.7)	1(5.6)	0(0)	7(15.9)	6(15.4)	9(10.6)	8(12.5)
Others	0(0)	0(0)	1(5.6)	0(0)	2(4.5)	0(0)	3(3.5)	0(0)

Table 21. Menstrual materials and school absence for a whole day in the past 3 months

Materials	Not absent (N=488)		1 to 15 days absent (N=112)		Materials usually used (N=600)	
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
Cloth (reusable)	378(77.5)		94(83.9)		472(78.7)	
Sanitary pads (disposable)	17(3.5)		10(8.9)		27(4.5)	
Sanitary pads (reusable)	60(12.3)		8(7.1)		68(11.3)	
Wears extra trousers	24(4.9)		0(0)		24(4)	
Other (nothing)	9(1.8)		0(0)		9(1.5)	

Table 22. Menstrual materials and school absence for part of the day in past 3 months

Materials	Not absent (N=508)		1 to 15 days absent (N=92)		Materials usually used (N=600)	
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
Cloth (reusable)	395(77.8)		77(83.7)		472(78.7)	
Sanitary pads (disposable)	18(3.5)		9(9.8)		27(4.5)	
Sanitary pads (reusable)	62(12.2)		6(6.5)		68(11.3)	
Wears extra trousers	24(4.7)		0(0)		24(4)	
others(nothing)	9(1.8)		0(0)		9(1.5)	

Table 23. Disposal of Menstrual Materials

Materials	Achham			Bajura			Parsa			Total		
	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	WinS	N-WinS	N-WinS
	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=300	N=300	N=300	N=300
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
Burn them	6(6.0)	3(3.0)	42(42.0)	4(4.0)	4(4.0)	2(2.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	50(16.7)	7(2.3)		
Throw away far from home	3(3.0)	17(17.0)	8(8.0)	8(8.0)	8(8.0)	8(8.0)	1(1.0)	1(1.0)	19(6.3)	26(8.7)		
Bury them in rubbish pit	26(26.0)	10(10.0)	7(7.0)	13(13.0)	6(6.0)	5(5.0)	39(13.0)	84(84)	85(28.3)	96(32.0)		
Bury them on land away from home	9(9.0)	5(5.0)	23(23.0)	7(7.0)	42(42.0)	18(18.0)	1(1.0)	1(1.0)	86(28.7)	100(33.3)		
Throw them in a stream	51(51.0)	57(57.0)	17(17.0)	2(2.0)	25(25.0)	4(4.0)	1(1.0)	1(1.0)	9(3.0)	30(10.0)		
use of cloths and re-use it after washing	3(3.0)	4(4.0)	1(1.0)	1(1.0)	9(9.0)	8(8.0)	12(4.0)					
Others	2(2.0)	4(4.0)										

Table 24. Use of re-usable sanitary pads

Materials	Achham			Bajura			Parsa			Total		
	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	WinS	N-WinS	N-WinS
	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
Ever heard about reusable sanitary pads	83 (83.0)	29 (29.0)	77 (77.0)	6 (6.0)	6 (6.0)	74 (74.0)	32 (32.0)	234 (78)	67 (22.3)			
	n=83	n=29	n=77	n=6	n=6	n=74	n=32	n=234	n=67			
Learned to make reusable pads	35 (42.2)	6 (20.7)	67 (87.0)	2 (33.3)	2 (33.3)	44 (59.5)	20 (62.5)	146 (62.4)	28 (41.8)			
Made reusable pads	25 (30.1)	5 (17.2)	54 (70.1)	2 (33.3)	2 (33.3)	36 (48.6)	12 (37.5)	115 (49.1)	19 (28.4)			
Used reusable pad	27 (32.5)	4 (13.8)	64 (83.1)	2 (33.3)	2 (33.3)	27 (36.5)	3 (9.4)	118 (50.4)	9 (13.4)			
Bought reusable sanitary pads	1 (1.2)	0 (.0)	4 (5.2)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	1 (1.4)	0 (.0)	6 (2.6)	0 (.0)			
Bought from:	n=1	n=0	n=4	n=0	n=0	n=1	n=0	n=6	n=0			
Medical shop	1 (100.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	1 (16.7)	0 (.0)			
Town market	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	4 (100.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	4 (66.7)	0 (.0)			

Materials	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS
	N (%)	N=100	N (%)	N=100	N (%)	N=100	N (%)	N=100
Friends	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	1 (100.0)	0 (.0)	1 (16.7)	0 (.0)
Have private to wash pad	n=27 3 (11.1)	n=4 1 (25.0)	n=64 33 (51.6)	n=2 1 (50.0)	n=27 15 (55.6)	n=3 3 (100.0)	n=118 51 (43.2)	n=9 5 (55.6)
Where do you dry reusable pads?								
Outside home in where clothes are dried	11 (40.7)	1 (25.0)	21 (32.8)	1 (50.0)	6 (22.2)	1 (33.3)	38 (32.2)	3 (33.3)
Outside home in a place away from view	10 (37.0)	1 (25.0)	14 (21.9)	1 (50.0)	13 (48.1)	2 (66.7)	37 (31.4)	4 (44.4)
Outside home covered by other clothes	5 (18.5)	2 (50.0)	27 (42.2)	0 (.0)	2 (7.4)	0 (.0)	34 (28.8)	2 (22.2)
Others	1 (3.7)	0 (.0)	2 (3.1)	0 (.0)	6 (22.2)	0 (.0)	9 (7.6)	0 (.0)

Table 25. Managing menstruation at school

Management	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS
	N (%)	N=100	N (%)	N=100	N (%)	N=100	N (%)	N=300
<b>When you start menstruating and you are at school, how do you usually manage?</b>								
Ask teacher for materials	47 (47.0)	4 (4.0)	2 (2.0)	0 (.0)	40 (40.0)	0 (.0)	89 (29.7)	4 (1.3)
Go home change and stay at home	23 (23.0)	53 (53.0)	33 (33.0)	17 (17.0)	25 (25.0)	86 (86.0)	81 (27.0)	156 (52.0)
You do nothing	11 (11.0)	27 (27.0)	17 (17.0)	58 (58.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	28 (9.3)	85 (28.3)
Go home change and come back	14 (14.0)	10 (10.0)	24 (24.0)	6 (6.0)	21 (21.0)	8 (8.0)	59 (19.7)	24 (8.0)
Use materials that you brought with you	1 (1.0)	4 (4.0)	10 (10.0)	9 (9.0)	2 (2.0)	1 (1.0)	13 (4.3)	14 (4.7)
Ask friends for materials	3 (3.0)	1 (1.0)	11 (11.0)	9 (9.0)	5 (5.0)	1 (1.0)	19 (6.3)	11 (3.7)
Go to a nearby school shop and buy materials	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	3 (3.0)	1 (1.0)	5 (5.0)	4 (4.0)	8 (2.7)	5 (1.7)
Others (don't know)	1 (1.0)	1 (1.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	2 (2.0)	0 (.0)	3 (1)	1 (.3)

Management	Achham			Bajura			Parsa			Total	
	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	
	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=300	N=300	N=300	N=300	
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	
<b>Menstrual materials available at school</b>	<b>61 (61.0)</b>	<b>11 (11.0)</b>	<b>3 (3.0)</b>	<b>1 (1.0)</b>	<b>52 (52.0)</b>	<b>0 (.0)</b>	<b>116 (38.7)</b>	<b>0 (.0)</b>	<b>12 (4.0)</b>		
<b>Who do you feel comfortable asking for materials to manage your menstruation?</b>											
Male teacher	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	6 (6.0)	0 (.0)	6 (6.0)	6 (2.0)		
Female teacher	76 (76.0)	45 (45.0)	25 (25.0)	9 (9.0)	60 (60.0)	9 (9.0)	161 (53.7)	9 (9.0)	63 (21.0)		
Friends	18 (18.0)	39 (39.0)	54 (54.0)	57 (57.0)	37 (37.0)	79 (79.0)	109 (36.3)	79 (79.0)	175 (58.3)		
Not comfortable / no-one	6 (6.0)	16 (16.0)	15 (15.0)	29 (29.0)	3 (3.0)	4 (4.0)	24 (8.0)	4 (4.0)	49 (16.3)		
Elder sister	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	2 (2.0)	0 (.0)	2 (2.0)	2 (.7)		
Sanitary pad is not available at school	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	6 (6.0)	5 (5.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	6 (2.0)	0 (.0)	5 (1.7)		
<b>If you have to leave the school compound during your menstruation who do you ask?</b>											
No-one	9 (9.0)	34 (34.0)	14 (14.0)	28 (28.0)	2 (2.0)	3 (3.0)	25 (8.3)	3 (3.0)	65 (21.7)		
Male /Female Class teacher	26 (26.0)	20 (20.0)	20 (20.0)	5 (5.0)	54 (54.0)	54 (54.0)	100 (33.3)	54 (54.0)	79 (26.3)		
Other teacher (including head teacher)	46 (46.0)	39 (39.0)	54 (54.0)	40 (40.0)	42 (42.0)	43 (43.0)	142 (47.3)	43 (43.0)	122 (40.7)		
Male/Female Class representative	13 (13.0)	5 (5.0)	12 (12.0)	26 (26.0)	2 (2.0)	0 (.0)	27 (9.0)	0 (.0)	31 (10.3)		
Friends	6 (6.0)	2 (2.0)	0 (.0)	1 (1.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	6 (2.0)	0 (.0)	3 (1.0)		
<b>Do you tell the reason for leaving school?</b>											
Yes	n=91	n=66	n=86	n=72	n=98	n=97	n=275	n=97	n=235		
	20 (22.0)	10 (15.2)	25 (29.1)	6 (8.3)	72 (73.5)	17 (17.5)	117 (42.5)	17 (17.5)	33 (14.0)		
No	71 (78.0)	56 (84.8)	61 (70.9)	66 (91.7)	26 (26.5)	80 (82.5)	158 (57.5)	80 (82.5)	202 (86.0)		



Table 25.a Managing menstruation at school by availability of sanitary pads at school when needed

When you start menstruating and you are at school, how do you usually manage?	Availability of sanitary pad at school when needed			Total
	No	Yes	Don't know	
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
You do nothing	98(86.7)	5(4.4)	10(8.8)	113(100.0)
Use materials that you brought with you	22(81.5)	1(3.7)	4(14.8)	27(100.0)
Ask friends for materials	23(76.7)	5(16.7)	2(6.7)	30(100.0)
Ask teacher for materials	8(8.6)	83(89.2)	2(2.2)	93(100.0)
Go to a nearby school shop and buy materials	13(100.0)	0(.0)	0(0)	13(100.0)
Go home change and come back	61(73.5)	14(16.9)	8(9.6)	83(100.0)
Go home change and stay at home	183(77.2)	20(8.4)	34(14.3)	237(100.0)
Till now it has not happened	1(33.3)	0(.0)	2(66.7)	3(100.0)
Don't know	1(100.0)	0(0)	0(0)	1(100.0)
Total	410(68.3)	128(21.3)	62(10.3)	600(100.0)

Table 26 Absence due to menstruation

Absence	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS
	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=300	N=300
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
<b>Whole days missed at school in past 3 months due to menstruation *</b>								
0 days	96 (96)	91 (91.0)	92 (92.0)	92 (92.0)	66 (66.0)	51 (51.0)	254 (84.7)	234 (78)
Days (1 to 15)	4 (4.0)	9 (9.0)	8 (8.0)	8 (8.0)	34 (34.0)	49 (49.0)	46 (15.3)	66 (22.0)

Main reason for missing a whole day at school

	n=4	n=9	n=8	n=8	n=34	n=49	n=46	n=66
Pain	1 (25.0)	5 (55.6)	5 (62.5)	4 (50.0)	27 (79.4)	41 (83.7)	33 (71.7)	50 (75.8)

Absence	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS
	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=300	N=300
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
Fear of leakage	3 (75.0)	4 (44.4)	2 (25.0)	3 (37.5)	5 (14.7)	3 (6.1)	10 (21.7)	10 (15.2)
Family advise not to go to school	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (4.1)	0 (0)	2 (3.0)
Family prevent from going to school	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (2.9)	1 (2.0)	1 (2.2)	1 (1.5)
Had to go and get sanitary materials	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (12.5)	1 (2.9)	0 (0)	1 (2.2)	1 (1.5)
Fear that books might be touched	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (4.1)	0 (0)	2 (3.0)
Due to first menstruation	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (12.5)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (2.2)	0 (0)
<b>Part of day missed at school in past 3 months due to menstruation</b>								
	<b>N=100</b>	<b>N=100</b>	<b>N=100</b>	<b>N=100</b>	<b>N=100</b>	<b>N=100</b>	<b>N=300</b>	<b>N=300</b>
0 days	95 (95)	95 (95.0)	90 (90.0)	95 (95.0)	71 (71.0)	62 (62.0)	256 (85.3)	252 (84)
No. of days (1-15)	5 (5.0)	5 (5.0)	10 (10.0)	5 (5.0)	29 (29.0)	38 (38.0)	44 (14.7)	48 (16.0)
<b>Reason for missing the part of day at school in past 3 months due to menstruation</b>								
	<b>n=5</b>	<b>n=5</b>	<b>n=10</b>	<b>n=5</b>	<b>n=29</b>	<b>n=38</b>	<b>n=44</b>	<b>n=48</b>
Pain	2 (40.0)	2 (40.0)	2 (20.0)	4 (80.0)	23 (79.3)	24 (63.2)	27 (61.4)	30 (62.5)
Fear of leakage	3 (60.0)	3 (60.0)	2 (20.0)	0 (0)	4 (13.8)	8 (21.1)	9 (20.5)	11 (22.9)
Had to go and get sanitary materials	0 (0)	0 (0)	5 (50.0)	0 (0)	2 (6.9)	4 (10.5)	7 (15.9)	4 (8.3)
Tiredness	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (5.3)	0 (0)	2 (4.2)
Family prevent from going to school	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (20.0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (2.1)
Inadequate toilets facilities	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (10.0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (2.3)	0 (0)

Table 27. Reasons for being absent because of menstruation during first month

Reasons for being absent	Month 1													
	Whole day absent						Partial day absent					Total (N)		
	Pain	Tiredness	Fear of leakage	No facilities in school	Other (mens. related)	No re-sponse	Total (N)	Pain	Tiredness	Fear of leakage	No facilities in school		Other (mens. related)	No re-sponse
<b>Day 1</b>	43.3 (26)	6.7 (4)	11.7 (7)	8.3 (5)	8.3(5)	21.7 (13)	<b>53</b>	60.0 (9)	20.0 (3)	6.7 (1)	0.0 (0)	6.7 (1)	6.7 (1)	<b>13</b>
<b>Day 2</b>	48.9 (22)	6.7 (3)	11.1 (5)	6.7 (3)	4.4 (2)	22.2 (10)	<b>46</b>	40.0 (6)	20.0 (3)	6.7 (1)	0.0 (0)	13.3 (2)	20.0 (3)	<b>12</b>
<b>Day 3</b>	41.5 (17)	9.8 (4)	4.9 (2)	2.4 (1)	9.8 (4)	31.7 (13)	<b>39</b>	20.0 (3)	20.0 (3)	26.7 (4)	13.3 (2)	6.7 (1)	13.3 (2)	<b>11</b>
<b>Day 4</b>	39.3 (11)	10.7 (3)	17.9 (5)	3.6 (1)	7.1 (2)	21.4 (6)	<b>28</b>	25.0 (2)	12.5 (1)	0.0 (0)	12.5 (1)	25.0 (2)	25.0 (2)	<b>5</b>
<b>Day 5</b>	25.0 (4)	12.5 (2)	6.3 (1)	6.3 (1)	0.0 (0)	50.8 (8)	<b>16</b>	14.3 (1)	14.3 (1)	0.0 (0)	14.3 (1)	28.6 (2)	28.6 (2)	<b>4</b>

\* Percentage may exceed 100 due to multiple responses

Table 28. Materials usually used by girls absent on first day during menstruation

Materials usually used *	Students absent on first day of first month during menstruation**	
	Absent	n (%)
Cloth (reusable)	44	(83.0)
Sanitary pads (disposable)	7	(13.2)
Sanitary pads (reusable)	1	(1.9)
Does not use any material instead wears two to three <i>suruwal</i> (pants)	1	(1.9)
Others (nothing)	0	(0)

\*Data was taken from interview with girls; and \*\*data was taken from diary data

Table 29. materials usually used by absent girls on first day of first month (including holidays)

Materials usually used *	Absent on first day of first month including holiday **			
	P(Present) n=298 n(%)	A(Absent) n=162 n(%)	H (Part of the day absent) n=15 n(%)	Total n=475 n(%)
Cloth (reusable)	220(60.1)	134(36.6)	12(3.3)	366(100.0)
Sanitary pads (disposable)	14(60.9)	8(34.8)	1(4.3)	23(100.0)
Sanitary pads (reusable)	43(72.9)	14(23.7)	2(3.4)	59(100.0)
Wears extra trousers	14(70.0)	6(30.0)	0(0)	20(100.0)
Others(nothing)	7(100.0)	0(0)	0(0)	7(100.0)

\*Data was taken from interview with girls; and \*\*data was taken from diary data

Table 29.a Girls describe themselves as disabled by reasons for missing school on first day of school on first month

Describe themselves as disabled	Reason for missing school on first day school on first month				
	Girls (n=53) N (%)	pain N (%)	Tiredness N (%)	Fear of staining in cloth N (%)	Total N (%)
Yes	7 (13.2)	4 (57.1)	1(14.3)	2(28.6)	7(100.0)

Table 30. Leakage and washing menstrual cloths in schools

Leakage and washing menstrual cloths	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total
	WinS N=100 N (%)	N-WinS N=100 N (%)	WinS N=100 N (%)	N-WinS N=100 N (%)	WinS N=100 N (%)	N-WinS N=100 N (%)	WinS N=300 N (%)
Always	0(0)	0(0)	4(4.0)	2(2.0)	0(0)	1(1.0)	4(1.3)
Sometimes	27(27.0)	33(33.0)	29(29.0)	43(43.0)	36(36.0)	27(27.0)	92(30.7)
							103(34.3)

**When you have your period in school, how often do you have leaks**

Leakage and washing menstrual cloths	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
Never	73(73.0)	67(67.0)	67(67.0)	55(55.0)	64(64.0)	72(72.0)	204(68.0)	194(64.7)
<b>if you have leakage when you are at school, what do you do?</b>								
	<b>n=27</b>	<b>n=33</b>	<b>n=33</b>	<b>n=45</b>	<b>n=36</b>	<b>n=28</b>	<b>n=96</b>	<b>n=106</b>
Stay at school	4(14.8)	3(9.1)	7(21.2)	35(77.8)	6(16.7)	0(0)	17(17.7)	38(35.8)
Go home, change and come back	1(3.7)	2(6.1)	5(15.2)	2(4.4)	7(19.4)	2(7.1)	13(13.5)	6(5.7)
Go home, change and stay at home	22(81.5)	28(84.8)	21(63.6)	8(17.8)	20(55.6)	26(92.9)	63(65.6)	62(58.5)
Wash inside school's toilet	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	2(5.6)	0(0)	2(2.1)	0(0)
Wash and ask for pad	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	1(2.8)	0(0)	1(1.0)	0(0)
<b>Have ever washed the menstrual materials at school</b>								
	<b>N=100</b>	<b>N=100</b>	<b>N=100</b>	<b>N=100</b>	<b>N=100</b>	<b>N=100</b>	<b>N=300</b>	<b>N=300</b>
Yes	1(1.0)	0(0)	22(22.0)	0(0)	3(3.0)	0(0)	26(8.7)	0(0)
No	99(99.0)	98(98.0)	76(76.0)	97(97.0)	90(90.0)	90(90.0)	265(88.3)	285(95.0)
Don't use reusable materials	0(0)	2(2.0)	2(2.0)	3(3.0)	7(7.0)	10(10.0)	9(3.0)	15(5.0)
<b>Reason for not washing sanitary material at school*</b>								
	<b>n=99</b>	<b>n=98</b>	<b>n=76</b>	<b>n=97</b>	<b>n=90</b>	<b>n=90</b>	<b>n=265</b>	<b>n=285</b>
No proper place to wash them	52(52.5)	80(81.6)	62(81.6)	84(86.6)	10(11.1)	82(91.1)	124(46.8)	246(86.3)
No water	75(75.8)	69(70.4)	27(35.5)	19(19.6)	26(28.9)	56(62.2)	128(48.3)	144(50.5)
Nowhere to dry it	19(19.2)	4(4.1)	16(21.1)	23(23.7)	12(13.3)	75(83.3)	47(17.7)	102(35.8)
No soap	8(8.1)	4(4.1)	10(13.2)	7(7.2)	29(32.2)	78(86.7)	47(17.7)	89(31.2)
Shyness	4(4.0)	11(11.2)	1(1.3)	0(0)	20(22.2)	8(8.9)	25(9.4)	19(6.7)
Others	1(1.0)	2(2.0)	6(7.9)	2(2.1)	24(26.7)	3(3.3)	31(11.7)	7(2.5)

\* Percentage may exceed 100 due to multiple responses

Table 31. Observation of enclosed open pan toilets

Observation	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS
	N=12	N=4	N=15	N=4	N=15	N=2	N=42	N=10
<b>Number of enclosed toilets in use</b>	4	2	5	2	4	2	13	6
How many enclosed toilets have: A functioning lock?	2	0	1	0	3	2	6	2
How many enclosed toilets have a bin?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
How many enclosed toilets have A closed bin for sanitary disposal?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
How many enclosed toilets have either types of bin full or overflowing?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
How many enclosed toilets have Water inside the cubicle or building	0	0	2	2	5	1	7	3
How many enclosed toilets have a bucket/jug or other means of putting water	1	0	2	2	2	1	5	3
<b>Number of open pan toilets in use?</b>	8	2	10	2	11	0	29	4
How many of open toilets in use have water and bucket/jug within?	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	0

Table 32. Condition of toilets

Condition	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS
	N=12	N=4	N=15	N=4	N=15	N=2	N=42	N=10
How many of all toilets in use have nearby soap and water facilities for hand washing?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
How many of all toilets in use appear clean?	0	0	2	2	3	2	5	4
How many of all toilets in use have a bad smell?	12	3	6	4	4	0	22	7
How many of all toilets in use have faeces in pan or elsewhere?	10	1	5	2	1	1	16	4
How many of all toilets in use have a functioning or enough light?	0	0	1	2	8	0	9	2
How many toilets in use have derogatory graffiti?	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
How many toilets are on the inward facing?	0	1	2	0	3	2	5	3
If yes, how many child friendly Water tap are there?	0	0	2	2	1	0	3	2
How many of all toilets in use have disabled access?	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0

Table 33. Use of toilets during menstruation

Use of toilets	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS	WinS	N-WinS
	N=100	N (%)	N=100	N (%)	N=100	N (%)	N=300	N (%)
<b>During your last period, how often did you change your menstruation materials in a day at school?</b>								
1 time	3 (3.0)	3 (3.0)	12 (12.0)	4 (4.0)	7 (7.0)	0 (.0)	22 (7.3)	7 (2.3)
2 time	2 (2.0)	4 (4.0)	25 (25.0)	9 (9.0)	11 (11.0)	1 (1.0)	38 (12.7)	14 (4.7)
3 time	2 (2.0)	0 (.0)	9 (9.0)	4 (4.0)	4 (4.0)	1 (1.0)	15 (5.0)	5 (1.7)
4 time	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	2 (2.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	2 (.7)
Never	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	2 (2.0)	28 (28.0)	3 (3.0)	16 (16.0)	5 (1.7)	44 (14.7)
Never it's not necessary	93 (93.0)	93 (93.0)	52 (52.0)	53 (53.0)	75 (75.0)	82 (82.0)	220 (73.3)	228 (76.0)
<b>Do you have permission to use the toilet during class?</b>								
Always	71 (71.0)	55 (55.0)	82 (82.0)	79 (79.0)	91 (91.0)	75 (75.0)	244 (81.3)	209 (69.7)
Sometimes	28 (28.0)	39 (39.0)	9 (9.0)	11 (11.0)	8 (8.0)	25 (25.0)	45 (15.0)	75 (25.0)
Never	1 (1.0)	6 (6.0)	9 (9.0)	10 (10.0)	1 (1.0)	0 (.0)	11 (3.7)	16 (5.3)
<b>Can you use the toilet during break?</b>								
Always	100 (100.0)	88 (88)	96 (96.0)	95 (95.0)	100 (100.0)	100 (100.0)	296 (98.7)	283 (94.3)
Never	0 (.0)	12 (12.0)	4 (4.0)	5 (5.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	4 (1.3)	17 (5.7)

Table 34 Ability to participate in classroom and school

Ability to participate	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	WinS	Non-WinS	WinS	Non-WinS	WinS	Non-WinS	WinS	Non-WinS
	N=100	N (%)	N=100	N (%)	N=100	N (%)	N=300	N (%)
<b>When you are menstruating how often do you feel you can -sit in the front of the classroom</b>								
Always	49 (49.0)	32 (32.0)	60 (60.0)	55 (55.0)	40 (40.0)	32 (32.0)	149 (49.7)	119 (39.7)
Sometimes	45 (45.0)	60 (60.0)	27 (27.0)	24 (24.0)	40 (40.0)	52 (52.0)	112 (37.3)	136 (45.3)

Ability to participate	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	WinS	Non-WinS	WinS	Non-WinS	WinS	Non-WinS	WinS	Non-WinS
	N=100 N (%)	N=100 N (%)	N=100 N (%)	N=100 N (%)	N=100 N (%)	N=100 N (%)	N=300 N (%)	N=300 N (%)
Never	6 (6.0)	8 (8.0)	13 (13.0)	21 (21.0)	20 (20.0)	16 (16.0)	39 (13.0)	45 (15.0)
<b>focus on what the teacher is saying</b>								
Always	44 (44.0)	37 (37.0)	65 (65.0)	67 (67.0)	45 (45.0)	40 (40.0)	154 (51.3)	144 (48.0)
Sometimes	54 (54.0)	63 (63.0)	35 (35.0)	33 (33.0)	52 (52.0)	55 (55.0)	141 (47.0)	151 (50.3)
Never	2 (2.0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (3.0)	5 (5.0)	5 (1.7)	5 (1.7)
<b>do classwork</b>								
Always	48 (48.0)	44 (44.0)	72 (72.0)	75 (75.0)	52 (52.0)	37 (37.0)	172 (57.3)	156 (52.0)
Sometimes	50 (50.0)	56 (56.0)	28 (28.0)	24 (24.0)	44 (44.0)	57 (57.0)	122 (40.7)	137 (45.7)
Never	2 (2.0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (1.0)	4 (4.0)	6 (6.0)	6 (2.0)	7 (2.3)
<b>answer questions when called on</b>								
Always	44 (44.0)	37 (37.0)	64 (64.0)	60 (60.0)	34 (34.0)	34 (34.0)	142 (47.3)	131 (43.7)
Sometimes	52 (52.0)	63 (63.0)	30 (30.0)	36 (36.0)	59 (59.0)	57 (57.0)	141 (47.0)	156 (52.0)
Never	4 (4.0)	0 (0)	6 (6.0)	4 (4.0)	7 (7.0)	9 (9.0)	17 (5.7)	13 (4.3)
<b>raise hand to answer when the teacher asks a question</b>								
Always	31 (31.0)	25 (25.0)	46 (46.0)	43 (43.0)	40 (40.0)	35 (35.0)	117 (39.0)	103 (34.3)
Sometimes	58 (58.0)	63 (63.0)	35 (35.0)	37 (37.0)	46 (46.0)	34 (34.0)	139 (46.3)	134 (44.7)
Never	11 (11.0)	12 (12.0)	19 (19.0)	20 (20.0)	14 (14.0)	31 (31.0)	44 (14.7)	63 (21.0)
<b>stand up to answer a question</b>								
Always	28 (28.0)	22 (22.0)	56 (56.0)	57 (57.0)	37 (37.0)	30 (30.0)	121 (40.3)	109 (36.3)
Sometimes	60 (60.0)	58 (58.0)	36 (36.0)	34 (34.0)	49 (49.0)	40 (40.0)	145 (48.3)	132 (44.0)
Never	12 (12.0)	20 (20.0)	8 (8.0)	9 (9.0)	14 (14.0)	30 (30.0)	34 (11.3)	59 (19.7)
<b>write on the board if you are asked</b>								
Always	24 (24.0)	12 (12.0)	50 (50.0)	44 (44.0)	27 (27.0)	24 (24.0)	101 (33.7)	80 (26.7)



Ability to participate	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	WinS	Non-WinS	WinS	Non-WinS	WinS	Non-WinS	WinS	Non-WinS
	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=300	N=300
Sometimes	41 (41.0)	40 (40.0)	28 (28.0)	29 (29.0)	33 (33.0)	23 (23.0)	102 (34.0)	92 (30.7)
Never	35 (35.0)	48 (48.0)	22 (22.0)	27 (27.0)	40 (40.0)	53 (53.0)	97 (32.3)	128 (42.7)

#### stay in class the whole time

Always	69 (69.0)	65 (65.0)	68 (68.0)	78 (78.0)	35 (35.0)	25 (25.0)	172 (57.3)	168 (56.0)
Sometimes	30 (30.0)	35 (35.0)	30 (30.0)	19 (19.0)	60 (60.0)	71 (71.0)	120 (40.0)	125 (41.7)
Never	1 (1.0)	0 (.0)	2 (2.0)	3 (3.0)	5 (5.0)	4 (4.0)	8 (2.7)	7 (2.3)

Ability to participate	Achham		Bajura		Parsa		Total	
	WinS	Non-WinS	WinS	Non-WinS	WinS	Non-WinS	WinS	Non-WinS
	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=100	N=300	N=300
Sometimes	75 (75.0)	68 (68.0)	71 (71.0)	84 (84.0)	46 (46.0)	32 (32.0)	192 (64.0)	184 (61.3)
Never	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	1 (1.0)	2 (2.0)	1 (1.0)	2 (.7)	2 (.7)

#### stay at school the whole day

Always	75 (75.0)	68 (68.0)	71 (71.0)	84 (84.0)	46 (46.0)	32 (32.0)	192 (64.0)	184 (61.3)
Sometimes	25 (25.0)	32 (32.0)	29 (29.0)	15 (15.0)	52 (52.0)	67 (67.0)	106 (35.3)	114 (38.0)
Never	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	1 (1.0)	2 (2.0)	1 (1.0)	2 (.7)	2 (.7)

#### go to school

Always	80 (80.0)	72 (72.0)	80 (80.0)	91 (91.0)	61 (61.0)	38 (38.0)	221 (73.7)	201 (67.0)
Sometimes	20 (20.0)	28 (28.0)	20 (20.0)	9 (9.0)	37 (37.0)	58 (58.0)	77 (25.7)	95 (31.7)
Never	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	2 (2.0)	4 (4.0)	2 (.7)	4 (1.3)

#### do homework

Always	81 (81.0)	72 (72.0)	92 (92.0)	92 (92.0)	60 (60.0)	40 (40.0)	233 (77.7)	204 (68.0)
Sometimes	19 (19.0)	28 (28.0)	8 (8.0)	8 (8.0)	38 (38.0)	57 (57.0)	65 (21.7)	93 (31.0)
Never	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	2 (2.0)	3 (3.0)	2 (.7)	3 (1.0)

## Questionnaire 1: Semi Structured Interview with Teacher

Brief them about the study and seek informed consent. Give them the information sheet about the study.

Interview date	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> / 2016 DD / MM / YYYY
Interviewer Name	
Health teacher name	
Gender	Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>
Age (completed age)	
Length of time living and working in school	
Subject taught	
School ID	
District ID	
Types of school	WinS Intervention <input type="checkbox"/> Non-WinS <input type="checkbox"/>

Q.N	Questions
1	What are the menstrual restrictions that are followed in this community?
2	What are the cultural practices about menstruation that are followed in this community?
3	How do these restrictions and practices affect girls here?
4	To what extent are restriction and customs around menstruation changing?
5	In this community, where do you think girls get most of their information about menstruation?
6	To what extent do you think this is a reliable/knowledgeable resource?

You may not know the answer to some of these questions. If you don't know, it's ok to say you don't know. Now we would like to ask you about the menstrual hygiene, sexual and reproductive health education that is given in this school.

7	In what circumstances are these topics taught? (probe for in class, in clubs, peer education) How appropriate is this?
8	How are these topics taught? (Probe for boys and girls together/separate, how much self-study vs. taught study, how are pictures and other materials used, how is group discussion used?)
9	How old are the students when they are taught about these topics? (How appropriate is this?)

**Ask if they taught the class:**

10	How did the students react?
11	How did you feel while teaching this class?
12	How easy was it to teach this class?
13	What did you find difficult about this class?
14	What kind of training or preparation had you had to teach this class?
15	What would have helped you feel more comfortable teaching this class? (probe for the involvement of health workers, or child clubs or youth volunteers)
16	What would have helped you teach this subject? (probe for materials, skills, classroom layout/environment, more time)
17	Have you or other teachers at school received training or support to teach topics related to menstrual hygiene?
18	How has this training or support helped you, or affected you?
19	Where else do pupils learn about menstrual hygiene? (probe for child clubs and WASH in schools activities). How has this helped? How effective was this forum for learning?
20	How have you been supported by the WASH in schools programme? (for WinS only)

Q.N	Questions
<b>Now we would like to talk about how girls here usually manage their menstruation at school.</b>	
21	If a girls' menstruation starts while she is at school, unexpectedly, what would she do?
22	What facilities or services are in place to help girls manage their menstruation at school? (Probe for: providing education; providing medicines (painkillers) and/or hot water bags; Provision of sick room; provision of change of clothes; provision of pads; provision of changing room; giving sanitary pad training to girls ; toilet related WASH strategy (waste disposal, bins, water supply in toilet etc.) (Say: we would like to see these at the end of the interview)
23	To what extent were these facilities available before the WASH in schools programme? (for WinS only)
24	To what extent are girls aware of these facilities? (why?)
25	How can a girl access these services? Can you tell us about the last time a girl accessed these services?
<b>We would like to ask you specifically about the toilets and waste disposal at your school.</b>	
26	To what extent are students able to use the toilet when they need to? Why? (what is the school policy as well as teacher practice about this – referring to their own classroom)
27	To what extent do you feel that the toilets meet the needs of menstruating girls? (probe for items on observation checklist)
28	How could the toilets be improved to better meet the needs to menstruating girls?
29	What efforts have been made to improve the toilets? To what extent were these successful, why/why not?
30	What are the barriers to making better toilet facilities for girls?
31	What would make it easier (facilitate) the improvement of toilet facilities?
32	How is toilet waste managed (i.e. papers and cloths)?
33	How effective are disposal systems for toilet waste?
34	How could the toilet waste disposal be improved?
35	What efforts have been made to improve the waste disposal? To what extent were these successful? why/why not?
36	What are the barriers to improving toilet waste disposal facilities?
37	What would make it easier to improve the toilet waste disposal facilities?
38	How are the toilets cleaned? (by whom, how often?)
39	To what extent do you feel the support staffs are helpful towards meeting the needs of menstruating girls?
40	How are support staffs managed/supervised?
41	How effective is the management of cleaning of the toilets?
42	How has this been improved over the past (x) years?
43	What has made this possible? What have been the barriers to improving the cleanliness of toilets?
44	In your opinion, to what extent do the facilities at school meet the needs of menstruating girls compared with before the WASH in schools programme? (Wins Only)
45	In general (i.e. not just toilets) what could be done to improve the facilities for girls to manage their menstrual hygiene more comfortably and confidently?
46	What are the barriers or difficulties in putting facilities and services in place to help girls manage their menstruation at school? Can you give an example

Q.N	Questions
47	To what extent do you think improvements (use examples they have given you) have been sustained?
48	To what extent to you think improvements (use examples they have given you) will be sustained?
49	What are the barriers or difficulties in sustaining improvements?
<b>Now we would like to ask about how menstruation affects girls at school.</b>	
50	How does having their menstruation affect girls at school? (What have you (and others) done to make them feel more comfortable?)
51	We have heard that girls who are menstruating often feel less confident in class. To what extent do you think this is true?
52	We have heard that girls who are menstruating often feel unable to raise their hand, sit or stand at the front of the class, stand up in class to answer questions. To what extent do you think this is true? (How do you try to make them feel more comfortable?)
53	We have heard that sometimes girls miss school because of their menstruation. To what extent do you think this is true?
54	Why do girls miss school because of their menstruation (not feeling well or other)?
55	How does the school (you) address this?
56	Have you noticed any teasing that girls experience in regards to menstruation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What did you do? (did you talk to anyone, how did you respond, etc.)</li> </ul>
57	In your opinion, how supportive are classmates generally?
58	How supportive are the other teachers and staff towards menstruating girls?
59	Can you tell us about a time when you were approached by a girl who had a problem with her menstruation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did you respond?</li> <li>• How capable did you feel to respond?</li> <li>• How comfortable did you feel?</li> <li>• What were the difficulties that you faced in responding?</li> </ul> (Skip if no example, do not answer hypothetically)
60	How supportive to the school are the parents in this community?
61	How have parents been involved in improving menstruation management facilities for girls?
62	How have parents been involved in enabling girls to feel more comfortable to manage their menstruation?
63	How effective is involvement of parents and communities in school concerns and activities?
64	What have been the barriers to involving parents in WASH in schools programme?
65	What effective strategies have you used to involve parents and community members in improving the school or raising awareness about WASH related issue/subject? (Can you tell us about a time when parents and community members were effectively involved?)

## Questionnaire 2: Topic Guide for Focus Group Discussions with girls

### Topic guide for focus group discussion with adolescent girls (grade 10)

In a focus group discussion questions are not addressed to the individual girl. Focus groups are used more for understanding norms, and inviting debate about those norms. If a girl wants to share personal information that is good, but it is not expected. Individual experience will be explored through group interviews.

**Brief them about the study and seek informed consent. Give them the information sheet about the study.**

Discussion date	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> / 2016 DD / MM / YYYY			
Number of participants	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>			
School ID				
District ID				
Place of discussion				
Facilitator name				
Note taker name				
Types of School	WinS Intervention <input type="checkbox"/> Non-WinS <input type="checkbox"/>			
S.N	Caste/ethnicity	Age (completed)	Class	Remarks
P1				
P2				
P3				
P4				

Q.N	Questions
	<p>Play 'flying finger' game. Each participant puts a finger on the table together. The facilitator lists things that fly, interspersed with things that don't fly. Participants should lift their finger only if a flying object is listed. A few rounds of this can be played eliminating those who lift their finger at the wrong time. This usually makes everyone laugh a lot.</p> <p>This game is an ice-breaker and should be used to make the atmosphere informal after consent has been taken.</p> <p>First of all we would like to discuss about this community</p>
1.	What do men do here?
2.	What do women do here?
3.	To what extent can women move freely outside the house in this community? (probe for different types of home, different times of day)
4.	To what extent does this change when then they are menstruating? • Why? What would happen if they...
5.	What kinds of restrictions do households here follow when women are menstruating? • What kinds of taboos or customs do households here follow when women are menstruating? Why?
6.	To what extent are there differences in restrictions and taboos between families of different ethnic groups?
7.	What different restrictions and taboos are there for school going girls and older female family members? Why?

8.	What kinds of families are more strict about following restrictions and taboos? (Nuclear, migrated, lots of women, socioeconomic status) Why?
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9.	To what extent do you think these restrictions and taboos are changing? Why?
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Now we would like to discuss the situation of a girl called Kabita. (Read the vignette)

Kabita lived in a rural village in (ADD district) her family didn't have a toilet and she used to defecate and urinate in the bushes a little far from her house. She was 13 years old and enjoyed school, despite the fact that her family were unsure how useful it was that she went to school. One day after school she had pain in her lower abdomen, and she went to relieve herself (urinate), and she noticed that her surwaal were stained with blood. She spoke to her sister-in-law, who gave her some cloth to put in her underwear, told her to wash her surwaal, and not to enter the kitchen, and not do to puja.

10.	How do you think she felt?
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Give each group member several metacards, and ask them to write one to two words that would describe how Kabita was feeling. Gather all the cards at once, and then place them on the table/floor where everyone can see them. Ask the girls why Kabita would be feeling like the words on the cards (one by one).

11.	How is Kabita different from girls in the community here? (emphasise parts of the story – unsupportive parents, no toilet, got help from her sister in law)
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12.	How much do you think a girl like Kabita would know about menstruation before she started menstruating? (Probe for restrictions and causes)
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13.	1. In your opinion and experience, how much do girls know about menstruation before they start menstruating?
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14.	2. Where would a girl like Kabita (first menstruation, without toilet, unsupportive parents) get information about menstruation? • Where do girls get information about menstruation from usually?
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15.	How is the information that girls usually receive before they start menstruating? How do you feel about the information? (useful, easy to understand)
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16.	To what extent would a girl like Kabita know how to manage her menstruation because she had seen how older female family members manage their menstruation?
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17.	What would a girl like Kabita do if there were no female relatives? • Where would she get advice?
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18	Where do girls here get information or advice if they are concerned about something to do with their menstruation, menstrual health or health related to your sexual and reproductive organs? • Why do they prefer to go to this resource than others? • How satisfactory if the information or advice that is received?
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Now we would like to ask you about how girls here usually manage their menstruation.

19.	What do they use during their menstruation? • How do they manage their menstruation? (Disposable, reusable cloths, old/new cloths, reusable/ disposable sanitary pads other) • Why do they use that material instead of others? • How did they start using that material? • What are the advantages of using this material? • What are the disadvantages of using this material? Probe for: comfort, cost, availability, absorbency, easy to keep in place, washing, disposal
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Pass around products and materials (this helps girls focus on the issue)

We would like to ask you about reusable sanitary pads

20.	<p>What have you heard about reusable sanitary pads? (only ask if they not talked about before)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is your experience with reusable sanitary pads? (Have you participated in making them? Where are they available to buy? Have they been made more than once? Probe regarding the WASH in schools programme)</li> <li>• To what extent do girls use reusable sanitary pads?</li> <li>• What do they think about them? (What is your experience with reusable sanitary pads?)</li> <li>• How do they feel in comparison with other methods?</li> <li>• What are the advantages in using reusable sanitary pads?</li> <li>• What are the disadvantages with using reusable sanitary pads?</li> </ul> <p>Probe for: comfort, cost, availability, absorbency, easy to keep in place, washing, disposal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would you like to use them – why, why not?</li> </ul>
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**We would like to ask you about disposable sanitary pads**

21.	<p>What have you heard about disposable sanitary pads? To what extent do girls use them?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do they think about them?</li> <li>• (What is your experience with disposable sanitary pads?)</li> <li>• How do they feel in comparison with other methods?</li> <li>• What are the advantages in using disposable sanitary pads?</li> <li>• What are the disadvantages with using disposable sanitary pads?</li> </ul> <p>Probe for: comfort, cost, availability, absorbency, easy to keep in place, washing, disposal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would you like to use them – why, why not?</li> </ul>
22.	<p>What would girls here prefer to use to manage their menstruation? Why?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If reusable cloths or pads are used, how do girls usually wash them? (where, when, how)</li> <li>• How do girls usually dry them?</li> <li>• What restrictions are there regarding where girls can wash and dry clothes?</li> </ul>
23.	<p>1. When girls need to dispose of menstrual hygiene materials, how do they do this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why do they do this instead of burning/burying etc.?</li> <li>• What are the advantages of doing this?</li> <li>• What are the disadvantages of doing this?</li> </ul>

**Body Mapping:**

Ask a volunteer to draw a picture of a girl on newsprint. Tell her it doesn't have to be perfect.

Ask: How do girls feels when they are menstruating?

Girls should mark on the picture the place in the body experiencing the symptom or feeling.

In particular, probe for when girls are at school or thinking about going to school, how do they feel?

If is it not obvious where to mark on the body - be creative. Probe for physical and mental feelings. After brain storming, go from head to foot to describe the feelings a girl has while menstruating.

**Now we would like to ask you about menstruation and your school**

24.	How does menstruation affect girls education? (probe for how girls feel about going to school, and how girls feel about participating in class)
25.	We have heard that sometimes girls miss school because of their menstruation. To what extent do you think this is true?
26.	Why do girls miss school because of their menstruation? (probe: not feeling well, not having a place to change, not having good toilet facilities, not having sanitary cloths etc.)
27.	We have heard that girls who are menstruating often feel less confident in class. To what extent do you think this is true?
28.	We have heard that girls who are menstruating often feel unable to raise their hand, stand at the front of the class, stand up in class to answer questions etc. To what extent do you think this is true?

29.	How easy do girls here find it to manage their menstruation when at school? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the things that make it difficult to manage menstruation at school?</li> <li>• What are the things that make it easier to manage menstruation at school?</li> </ul> (probe for WASH in schools programme factors – supportive staff, a changing room, improved toilets, sanitary pads/clothes available at school (ALWAYS available, check for sustainability))
30.	Where do girls here change their sanitary materials? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the difficulties in changing?</li> <li>• How do girls manage dirty clothes at school?</li> </ul>
31.	Where do girls get help in managing their menstruation here? (probe, friends, teachers, staff) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How useful is this help?</li> </ul>
32.	In your school how much teasing of girls about menstruation is there? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can you give an example of this?</li> <li>• How was this dealt with? (Did they talk to anyone, how did they respond, etc.)</li> </ul>

Now we would like to ask you about the school facilities for menstruating girls, and how these have changed over the past (x) years.

33.	How do the <b>toilets</b> meet the needs of menstruating girls? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss the items on the observation checklist.</li> <li>• What are the toilet related factors that make it easy or difficult to manage your menstruation?</li> <li>• How could the toilet be improved to help you maintain hygiene better and be more comfortable managing your menstruation?</li> <li>• To what extent can all girls use the water source in the school compound? (Probe for caste discrimination)</li> </ul>
34.	To what extent can girls use the toilet when they need to (during class, before class and during breaks)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How often are the toilets locked or inaccessible?</li> <li>• What happens when the toilets are not available?</li> </ul>
35.	How have the toilets been improved?
36.	How do girls dispose of their cloths or sanitary pads when they are at school? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do girls here think about the disposal facilities?</li> <li>• How have the disposal facilities been improved?</li> </ul>
37.	To what extent are the cleaning staff are supportive/helpful? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How has cleaning of the toilets improved?</li> </ul>
38.	What other improvements have been made in your school to make it easier for menstruating girls? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How were girls consulted or involved in any improvement (other improvements or others above – toilets etc.)</li> </ul>
39.	If menstruation starts while girls are at school, unexpectedly, what do they do? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How is this different from before (the WASH in schools programme)</li> </ul>

Kabita had received a class about sexual and reproductive health and menstruation at school. The class had boys and girls and the teacher felt a bit embarrassed. The boys were laughing and the girls were embarrassed.

When the teacher asked if there were any questions, everyone was silent. Then the class went on to their normal work and Kabita was left feeling confused and embarrassed.

40.	What do you think about the way that this class was taught?
41.	What do you think would have made the class better/improve the class?



42.	<p>Have you received any classes about sexual and reproductive health and menstruation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How was the class? Tell me about it</li> <li>• probe for who took the class, whether they were able to ask questions or not, whether the teacher discussed the topic or not, whether the text book was used etc.)</li> <li>• What did you like about it? Why? (What made it like that?)</li> <li>• What did you not like about it? Why? (What made it like that?)</li> <li>• Were boys and girls taught separately?</li> <li>• Was the teacher male or a female?</li> </ul>
43.	<p>Have you received any information about sexual and reproductive health and menstruation through any other sources (probe for mentors/young champions, child clubs, media, friends, family members, neighbours etc.)</p>

Thank you for your time.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us?  
Do you have any questions?

### Questionnaire 3 -Topic guide for group interviews with menstruating adolescent girls

Brief them about the study and seek informed consent. Give them the information sheet about the study.

Interview date	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> / 2016 DD / MM / YYYY	
Number of participants	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	
Participants Name		
Caste/ethnicity of girls participants	<u>Participant 1</u> Hill Dalit .....1 Terai Dalit.....2 Hill Janajati.....3 Terai Janajati .....4 Madhesi.....5 Muslim.....6 Brahmin/Chettri.....7 Others.....98	<u>Participant 2</u> Hill Dalit .....1 Terai Dalit.....2 Hill Janajati.....3 Terai Janajati .....4 Madhesi.....5 Muslim.....6 Brahmin/Chettri.....7 Others.....98
Age (completed age of participants)	Participant 1 <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	Participant 2 <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Grade	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
School ID		
Place of interview		
District ID		
VDC ID		
Interviewer name		
Types of School	WinS Intervention <input type="checkbox"/>	Non-WinS <input type="checkbox"/>

Q.N	Questions
We would like to ask you about how women in your family manage their menstruation.	
1	To what extent are you aware that your female family members or friends are menstruating? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How do you know that they are menstruating?</li> </ul>
2	What kinds of restrictions or taboos do you follow in your house when a female family member is menstruating?
3	What happens if these restrictions or taboos are not followed?
4	In your experience, to what extent do you think restrictions and taboos are changing? Why?
5	To what extent can women move freely outside the house in your household normally? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent does this change when then they are menstruating? Why?</li> </ul>
We would like to ask you to think back to you first started menstruating.	
6	Please tell us about your experience. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What happened?</li> <li>What did you do?</li> <li>How did others react?</li> </ul>
7	How did you feel when you started menstruating?  (Probe for feeling confused, upset, embarrassed, happy, proud)
8	What did you know about menstruation before you started menstruating? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where did you get this knowledge and information from? (What did they/it tell you?)</li> </ul>
9	Have you received any classes about sexual and reproductive health and menstruation?

10	How was the class? What do you think about the way that this class was taught?
11	What do you think would have made the class better/improve the class? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell me about who took the class</li> <li>• whether they were able to ask questions or not</li> <li>• whether the teacher discussed the topic or not</li> <li>• Whether the text book was used etc.)</li> </ul>
12	What did you like about it? Why? (What made it like that?)
13	What did you not like about it? Why? (What made it like that?)
14	Were boys and girls taught separately?
15	Was the teacher male or a female?
16	Have you received any information about sexual and reproductive health and menstruation through any other sources  (Probe for mentors/young champions, child clubs, media, friends, family members, neighbours etc.)
17	What is your experience of the menstrual hygiene related activities conducted by the child clubs? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What were the activities?</li> <li>• How were you involved?</li> <li>• What did you like about it?</li> <li>• What did you not like about it?</li> </ul>
18	Think back to a time when you were concerned about something to do with your menstrual health or health related to your sexual and reproductive organs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who did you talk to?</li> <li>• Why did you go to them?</li> <li>• How helpful were they?</li> <li>• To what extent are you satisfied with the response you received?</li> <li>• Why do you prefer to go to this resource than others?</li> </ul>
Now we would like to ask you about how you manage your menstruation at home.	
19	What materials do you use to absorb the blood from your menstruation? (reusable cloths, disposable sanitary pads, reusable sanitary pads etc.)
20	Why do you use that material/product instead of others? How did you start using that material? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the advantages of using this material?</li> <li>• What are the disadvantages of using this material?</li> <li>• Probe for absorbency, leakage, staying in place, disposal, washing, drying, availability, cost etc.</li> </ul>
21	What have you heard about reusable sanitary pads? (only ask if they not talked about before) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is your experience with reusable sanitary pads? What do you think about them?</li> <li>• Have you used them?</li> <li>• Have you participated in making them? Have they been made more than once?</li> <li>• Where are they available to buy? (Probe regarding the WASH in schools programme)</li> <li>• How do they feel in comparison with other methods?</li> <li>• What are the advantages in using reusable sanitary pads?</li> <li>• What are the disadvantages with using reusable sanitary pads?</li> </ul> (Probe for: comfort, cost, availability, absorbency, easy to keep in place, washing, disposal) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would you like to use them – why, why not?</li> </ul>
22	What is your experience with disposable sanitary pads? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did you get them/buy them?</li> <li>• How do they feel in comparison with other methods?</li> <li>• Would you like to use them – why, why not?</li> <li>• What do you think are the advantages in using disposable sanitary pads?</li> <li>• What do you think are the disadvantages with using disposable sanitary pads?)</li> </ul>

23	<p>What have you heard about reusable sanitary pads?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you heard anything about women or girls making reusable sanitary pads?</li> <li>• What do you think are the advantages of reusable sanitary pads?</li> <li>• What do you think are the disadvantages of reusable sanitary pads?</li> </ul>
24	<p>What would you prefer to use to manage your menstruation? Why?</p>
<p>Now we would like to ask you about the menstruation and school</p>	
25	<p>How easy is it to manage your menstruation at school?</p>
26	<p>What makes it easier to manage your menstruation at school?</p>
27	<p>What are the things that make it easier to manage menstruation at school?</p> <p>(probe for WASH in schools programme factors – supportive staff, a changing room, improved toilets, sanitary pads/clothes available at school (ALWAYS available, check for sustainability)</p>
28	<p>What makes it difficult to manage your menstruation at school?</p>
29	<p>What difficulties do you have in changing your sanitary materials while you are at school?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you dispose of the used cloths at school?</li> <li>• What do you think about the disposal facilities?</li> </ul>
30	<p>How have disposal facilities been improved over the past (x) years?</p>
31	<p>How do you manage the reusable cloths?</p> <p>(Probe for washing and drying them, taking them home etc.)</p>
32	<p>How do the toilets meet the needs of menstruating girls?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show and discuss the observation checklist.</li> <li>• To what extent do the toilets meet these criteria?</li> </ul>
33	<p>What are the things about the toilet that make it easy or difficult to manage your menstruation?</p>
34	<p>How have the toilets been improved over the past (x) years?</p>
35	<p>To what extent are you able to use the toilet when you need to (during class, before class and during breaks)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How often are the toilets locked or inaccessible? Why? What do you do when it's not available?</li> </ul>
36	<p>To what extent do you feel the cleaning staffs are supportive/ helpful?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How has the cleaning of facilities been improved over the past (x) years?</li> </ul>
37	<p>What other facilities are available for girls when they are menstruating, what is your opinion about these facilities?</p> <p>(Probe: a room for taking rest, other facilities to change or bathe etc.)</p>
38	<p>How were you involved in discussions about improving facilities?</p>
39	<p>Who do you go to for support if you have a problem with your menstruation at school? (Think back to a time when you had a problem with your menstruation at school. Tell us about it...)</p>
40	<p>How supportive are your friends?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How would you feel asking for help from friends? Why?</li> </ul>
41	<p>How supportive are the teachers and other staff? How would you feel asking for help from teachers? Why?</p>
42	<p>To what extent has this changed over the past (x) years?</p>
43	<p>If your menstruation starts while you are at school, unexpectedly, what would you do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who would you ask for help?</li> <li>• Would you get clean underwear or clothes?</li> <li>• Where would you go in the school to change?</li> </ul>

44	How is this different from what you would do before the WASH in schools programme? (WinS only)
Now we would like to ask you about how menstruation affects you at school.	
45	How does menstruation affect the way you feel in school? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When you are menstruating?</li> <li>• How do you feel about going to school?</li> <li>• What are your main concerns?</li> </ul>
46	We have heard that girls who are menstruating often feel less confident in class. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent do you think this is true for you or your friends?</li> <li>• We have heard that girls who are menstruating often feel unable to raise their hand sit or stand at the front of the class stand up in class to answer questions etc.</li> <li>• To what extent to you think this is true?</li> </ul>
47	We have heard that sometimes girls miss school because of their menstruation. To what extent do you think this is true?
48	Have you ever missed school because of your menstruation (half day or full day or both)? For what reason do you miss school when you are menstruating? (Probe: Can you tell us about the last time you missed school when you were menstruating?) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did you feel about missing school?</li> <li>• What did your parents think about this?</li> </ul>
49	Can you tell us about any teasing that you or your friends have experienced in regards to menstruation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did you deal with this? (did you talk to anyone, how did you respond, etc.)</li> <li>• How has this changed or improved over the past (x) years? (frequency and incidence of teasing, and also strategies to deal with teasing)</li> <li>• How have the attitudes of boys and staff changed over the past (x) years? Why?</li> </ul>

Thank you for your time.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us?  
Do you have any questions?

## Questionnaire 4: Semi-structured interview with mothers

Brief them about the study and seek informed consent. Give them the information sheet about the study.

Interview date	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> / 2016 DD / MM / YYYY
Interviewer name	
Mother Name	
Caste/ethnicity of participant	Hill Dalit .....1 Terai Dalit.....2 Hill Janajati.....3 Terai Janajati .....4 Madhesi.....5 Muslim.....6 Brahmin/Chettri.....7 Others.....98
Age (completed age)	
School ID	
District ID	
VDC ID	
School Types	WinS Intervention <input type="checkbox"/> Non-WinS <input type="checkbox"/>

Q.N	Questions
1	To what extent can women move freely outside the house in your household normally? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent does this change when then they are menstruating?</li> </ul> Why?
2	What are the menstrual taboos or customs or restrictions that are followed in this household? (What restrictions are followed in this household?)
3	How do you feel when you are restricted when you are menstruating? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How do the restrictions and customs make you feel?</li> </ul>
Now we would like to talk to you about how you manage your menstruation.	
4	How do you manage your menstruation? (disposable, reusable cloths, sanitary pads other)
5	Why do you use that material instead of others? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How did you start using that material?</li> <li>What are the advantages of using this material?</li> <li>What are the disadvantages of using this material?</li> </ul>
6	What have you heard about reusable sanitary pads? Have you heard anything about women making reusable sanitary pads? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What would be the advantages of using them?</li> <li>What would be disadvantages of using them?</li> </ul>
7	What is your experience with disposable sanitary pads? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How do they feel in comparison with other methods?</li> <li>What are the advantages in using disposable sanitary pads?</li> <li>What are the disadvantages with using disposable sanitary pads? (probe for cost, availability, comfort, etc.)</li> <li>Would you like to use them – why, why not?</li> </ul>
8	What would you prefer to use to manage your menstruation? Why?
9	If you use reusable cloths or pads, how do you manage the washing of them? (where, when, how) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How do you manage the drying of them? Why?</li> </ul>

10	When you need to dispose of menstrual hygiene materials, how do you do this? Why? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why do you do this instead of burning/burying etc.?</li> <li>• What are the advantages of doing this?</li> <li>• What are the disadvantages of doing this?</li> </ul>
----	--

Now we would like to talk to you about your daughter and menstruation.

11	Have you ever spoken to your daughter about menstruation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In what context?</li> <li>• What did you say? (probe for knowledge about why women menstruate)</li> <li>• How easy was it for you to talk to your daughter about menstruation?</li> <li>• How did she react?</li> </ul>
----	--

12	Where does your daughter get information and advice about menstruation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent do you think this appropriate/optimal?</li> </ul>
----	---

13	How do you think that better advice and information about menstruation could be provided/available?
----	---

14	To what extent does your daughter follow the same menstrual taboos and restrictions that you do? Why? How do you feel about that?
----	---

15	If you have a son, have you spoken to him about menstruation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What did you say?</li> <li>• How easy was it for you to talk to him about menstruation?</li> </ul>
----	---

16	In this community, how appropriate is it to talk about menstruation generally and with your children? Why?
----	--

We would like to talk to you about menstruation and your daughters' school.

17	We have heard that sometimes girls miss school (half or full day) because of their menstruation. To what extent do you think this is true?
----	--

18	Why do girls miss school because of their menstruation (not feeling well or other)?
----	---

19	Has your daughter ever missed school because of her menstruation?
----	---

20	Can you tell us about the last time your daughter missed school when she was menstruating? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did you advise her when this happened?</li> </ul>
----	---

21	How does having their menstruation make girls feel at school?
----	---

22	What have you heard your daughter say, or observed her feelings about when she is menstruating and going to school?
----	---

23	We have heard that girls who are menstruating often feel less confident in class. To what extent do you think this is true? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has your daughter told you anything about this?</li> </ul>
----	---

24	How easy does your daughter find it to manage her menstruation when she is at school? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the things that make it difficult to manage menstruation at school?</li> <li>• What are the things that make it easier to manage menstruation at school?</li> <li>• How supportive are your daughters friends?</li> <li>• How supportive are the teachers and other staff?</li> <li>• How has this changed over the past (x) years?</li> </ul>
----	--

25	Has your daughter told you about any teasing that her or her friends have experienced in regards to menstruation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How was this dealt with?</li> <li>• How satisfied were you with this response?</li> </ul>
----	--

Now we would like to ask you about the school facilities for menstruating girls

26	What do you know about the facilities for menstruating girls at your daughter's school when they are menstruating?
----	--

27	To what extent do the facilities at school meet the needs of menstruating girls?
----	--

28	What have you heard your daughter say about the toilets at school?
----	--

29	To what extent do the toilets meet the needs of menstruating girls?
----	---

30	How does your daughter dispose of cloths or sanitary pads when she is at school?
----	--

31	If your daughter's menstruation starts while she is at school, unexpectedly, what would she do?
32	What activities related to menstrual hygiene has the school conducted over the past (x) years?  (probe for establishment/reactivation of WASH committee, reusable sanitary pad training, improved waste disposal, improved water and sanitation facilities (including toilet), or provision of pads or other facilities for menstruating girls, advocacies that has been done to end chhaupadi and other taboos)
33	How has your daughter been involved in these activities? (Why? why not?)
34	How successful have these activities been? (Why? Why not?)
35	How sustained have these facilities or activities been? (Why? Why not?)
36	What role do you think that parents should have in improving school facilities for menstruating girls?
37	How have you been involved in the school activities to improve facilities for menstruating girls? (why/why not?)

Thank you for your time.  
Do you have any questions?



## Questionnaire 5: Semi-structured Interview with Head Teachers

Interview Date	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> / 2016 DD / MM / YYYY	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> / 2016 DD / MM / YYYY
Interviewer's Name		
Interview result (Instruction; please mention reason behind refusing)	Interview completed..... 1 Not met concerned person for interview..... 2 Interview Incomplete..... 3 Refused for Interview..... 4 Other (specify).....5.	
Head teacher name		
Gender	Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>	
School		
District code		
VDC/municipality code		
Ward		
Temple on school compound	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Types of School	WinS Intervention <input type="checkbox"/> Non-WinS <input type="checkbox"/>	
No. of teachers in school	Male <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Female <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	
No. of health teachers in school	Male <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Female <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	

### Number of Students

Grades	N Girls	N Boys	Total
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			

We would like to ask you some questions about school staffing, management, and about any support you have had with Water and Sanitation issues and menstrual hygiene management.

Q.N	Questions	Response	Code	Instruction
1	Do you have WASH focal Person/ Teacher in your School?	Yes	1	
		No	0	
2	Do you have School Nurse or trained health person in your School?	Yes	1	
		No	0	
3	Does the school have parents-teachers association?	Yes	1	If no, skip to q.n. 5
		No	0	
4	Does the school have regular monthly parents-teachers Association meetings?	Yes	1	
		No	0	

Q.N	Questions	Response	Code	Instruction
5	Does the school have a School Management Committee?	Yes		If no skip to q.n. 7
		No		
6	If yes how active is it?	Very active	1	
		Moderately active	2	
		Less active	3	
		Formed but not active	4	
7	What role does the School management Committee have in water and sanitation or menstrual hygiene related matters? (Open question).	Please write.....		
8	Does the school have any Child clubs?	Yes	1	If no, skip to q.n. 11
		No	0	
9	If yes, are any clubs that discuss or work on issues of menstrual hygiene, water and sanitation?	Yes	1	
		No	0	
10	How active are they?	Very active	1	
		Moderately Active	2	
		Less active	3	
		Formed but not active	4	
11	Does your school have an annual WASH features in the school improvement plan?	Yes	1	
		No	0	
12	Does your school have a fund to manage the cleanliness of the compound and toilet?	Yes	1	
		No	0	
13	Has your school received any support to teach menstruation related education at school?	Yes	1	If no skip to 19
		No	0	
14	If yes, what types of support	WinS training		
		Others (specify)		
15	If the school has received support (WinS or other training), how many teachers have received the training?	No. of female teachers <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> No. of male teachers <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		
16	What was the source of the support?	District Education Office	1	
		Red Cross	2	
		Restless Development	3	
		Others (Specify).....		
17	Was menstrual hygiene included in the training?	Yes	1	
		No	0	

Q.N	Questions	Response	Code	Instruction
18	If your school has received training. Please tell us about how the training has affected the students, the teachers and generally the school (open question).	Students:  Teachers:  School:		
19	How do girls receive menstruation related education at school? (multiple response)	As part of the curriculum As part of a specific training Only when they ask for information They don't receive menstruation related education at school Others (Specify)...	1 2 3 4 96	
20	Who teaches menstruation related curriculum at school?	Teachers School Nurse Health workers Mentors/Young Champions Others (specify).....	1 2 3 4 96	
21	If menstruation related education is taught at school, at what age and grade do girls starts getting this information?	Age <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Grade <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>		
22	Are sanitary napkins (or equivalent materials) available for girls at school on a regular basis?	Yes No	1 0	
23	Are sanitary napkins (or equivalent materials) available for girls at the school in an emergency/accident situation?	Yes No	1 0	
24	What is the school policy for bullying or teasing, for example if girls are teased about menstruation?	Please write:		
25	What strategies has the school implemented to make girls feel more comfortable to manage their menstruation at school?	.....		

Q.N	Questions	Response	Code	Instruction
26	What facilities has the school provided to make girls feel more comfortable to manage their menstruation at school?	Providing education	1	
		Providing medicines (painkillers) and/or hot water bags	2	
		Provision of sick room	3	
		Provision of changing room	4	
		Giving sanitary pad training to girls	5	
		Waste disposal facility	6	
		Water supply in toilets	7	
		Attached incinerator/ bins in toilets	8	
		Others (Specify)..... 96		
27	<p>Please tell us about the factors that helped you to promote WinS. (open question only for WinS schools)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Toilet improvement, waste disposal, water supply-</li> <li>• CGD friendly, regular routine to maintain/clean toilet, CGD friendly,</li> <li>• common toilets for teachers, students,</li> <li>• capacity building: MHM education and pad making training/orientation,</li> <li>• regular monitoring of personal hygiene, Hygiene promotion (Hand washing with soap station)</li> </ul>			
28	<p>Please tell us about the difficulties of promoting WinS? (open question only for WinS schools)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political influences in allocation of WASH facilities,</li> <li>• priority from school management committee,</li> <li>• separate toilets for teachers,</li> <li>• water supply in school toilets,</li> <li>• monitoring mechanism of WASH facilities,</li> <li>• Hygiene behavior of students,</li> <li>• Fund or system for operation and maintenance,</li> <li>• CGD friendly toilets)</li> </ul>			

Signature of Researcher:

Signature of Head Teacher:

## Questionnaire 6: School toilets observation checklist

(to be used by researcher observing toilets and also in discussion with teachers and girls)

Observation date	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> / 2016 DD / MM / YYYY
Observer Name	<input type="text"/>
School Code	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
District code	<input type="text"/>
VDC code	<input type="text"/>
Ward	<input type="text"/>
Intervention Types	WinS Intervention <input type="checkbox"/> Non-WinS <input type="checkbox"/>

Q.N	Question	Re-sponse	Code	Instruction
1	Is there a toilet in the school	Yes	1	
		No	0	
2	Is there a separate girls' only toilet?	Yes	1	If it's a girls toilet observe the girl toilet and If there is no separate toilet for girls then observe the common toilet
		No	0	
3	How many toilets are there in use?	Enclosed toilet <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Open Pan <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>		
4	How many enclosed toilets have:	A functioning lock? <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>		
		A bin? <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>		
		A closed bin for sanitary disposal? <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>		
		Either types of bin full or overflowing? <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>		
		Water inside the cubicle or building <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>		
		A bucket/jug or other means of putting water in toilet? <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>		
5	How many of open toilets in use have water and bucket/jug within?	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>		
6	How many of all toilets in use have nearby soap and water facilities for hand washing?	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>		
7	How many of all toilets in use appear clean? (Instruction: "Clean" means that the floor, pan and wall of the toilets are visibly clean and there are no visible flies and smell of urine or faeces)	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>		
8	How many of all toilets in use have a bad smell?	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>		
9	How many of all toilets in use have faeces in pan or elsewhere?	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>		
10	How many of all toilets in use have a functioning or enough light?	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>		

Q.N	Question	Re- sponse	Code	Instruction
11	How many toilets in use have derogatory graffiti?	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		
12	How many toilets are on the inward facing?	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		
13	Is there child friendly Water tap? [A tap which is accessible by children of all ages is called a child friendly tap. Having said this- this should be built in a place which is easy to access by children, having less steep staircase (if there should be any) and with proper handrails , having tap at lower height for them to operate easily, require less force to operate the tap ]	Yes	1	
		No	0	
14	Is there disabled friendly toilet? [Differently-abled friendly toilet: should include a ramp up to toilet, sufficient space for a wheelchair in the passage, hand railing in the passage and, within the toilet cubicles, appropriate types of seating arrangements and support on the toilet.]	Yes	1	If "No'" skip to QN 16
		No	0	
15	How many of all toilets in use have disabled access? (add criteria)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		
16	Is there a separate toilet for girls in secondary classes	Yes	1	
		No	0	

Any additional comments:

## Questionnaire 7: Semi-structured Interview with Boys

Interview date	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> / 2016 DD / MM / YYYY
Interviewer ID	
Student ID	
Class	
School Code	
District Code	
VDC Code	
Type of school	WinS Intervention <input type="checkbox"/> Non-WinS <input type="checkbox"/>

Now we are going to ask you some information about you and your home.

### Section 1 Socio demographic information

Q.N	Questions	Response	Code	Instruction
1	What is your completed age?			
2	Caste/Ethnicity	Hill Dalit Terai Dalit Hill Janajati Terai Janajati Madhesi Muslim Brahmin/Chettri Others(specify)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 98	
3	Religion	Hindu Muslim (Islam) Buddhist Christian Other(specify)	1 2 3 4 96	
4	Primary language	Maithali Nepali Bhojpuri Tamang Gurung Doteli Others (Specify)	1 2 3 4 5 6	
5	Would you describe yourself as disabled?	Yes No	1 0	
6	What level of education does your mother have?	None Below class 10 Class 10 and above University Don't know	1 2 3 4 98	
7	What level of education does your father have?	None Below class 10 Class 10 and above University Don't know	1 2 3 4 98	

Q.N	Questions	Response		Code	Instruction
8	What is your roof made of?	Thatch/palm leaf/reed/grass		1	
		Bamboo		2	
		Planks/wood		3	
		Tiles/stones		4	
		Tin/Metals		5	
		Calamine/cement fibre		6	
		Cement Dhalan		7	
		Others (specify)		96	
9	What is the wall of your house made of?	Cane/Palm/trunks/Bamboos		1	
		Burnt brick and clay		2	
		Unburnt brick and clay		3	
		Bamboo and clay		4	
		Stone and clay		5	
		Plywood/Wooden plank		6	
		Brick and cement		7	
		Stone and cement		8	
		Cement block		9	
		Others (Specify)		96	
10	Do you have toilet in your house?	Yes		1	If No Skip to Q No. 12
		No		0	
11	What kind of toilet do you have?	Flush to septic tank		1	
		Flush to somewhere else		2	
		Pit latrine with slab		3	
		Pit latrine without slab/open pit		4	
		Others (Specify)		96	
12	If you don't have toilet where do you go?	Open place		1	
		Field		2	
		Forest area		3	
		Neighbours toilet		4	
		Others (Specify)		96	
13	What is the source of water at your home?	Pipe water in compound		1	
		Tube well /bore hole water		2	
		River / spring source		3	
		Public tap		4	
		Well/Inar/Kuwa		5	
14	Does your household have	Yes	No	Don't know	
14a	Electricity	1	0		
14b	Sloar	1	0		
14b	Radio	1	0		
14c	Television	1	0		
14d	Mobile phone	1	0		
14e	Computer	1	0		
14f	Livestock	1	0		
14g	Bank account	1	0	98	

Now we would like to ask you some questions about menstruation.



15	Do you know about menstruation?	Yes No	1 0	
16	Do you have any female family members at home who are aged 12 to 60?	Yes No	1 0	If "No" skip to 18
17	If yes, how do you know they are menstruating?	Restriction at home When they dry used cloths When they have stomach /any kind of pain When they have Leakage Others (Specify)	1 2 3 4 96	
18	Have you ever talked to other family members about menstruation?	Yes No	1 0	
19	Have you ever helped a family member or a female friend to manage their menstruation?	Yes No	1 0	
20	Would you feel able to buy sanitary pads if a friend or family member needed them?	Yes No	1 0	

Now we would like to ask you about your household and menstruation

Q.N	Questions	Response	Code	Instruction
In your household:				
21	When women are menstruating, can they attend temples?	Yes No	1 0	If "Yes" skip to 23
22	If no, why not? (Tick one)	They don't feel well They fear divine retribution Their family don't allow them They don't want to do They feel it is the right thing to do Others (Specify)	1 2 3 4 5 96	
23	When women are menstruating can they attend religious occasions? (Puja, wedding, blessings, bratabandha)	Yes No	1 0	If "Yes" skip to 25
24	If no, why not (Tick one)	They don't feel well They fear divine retribution Their family don't allow them They don't want to do They feel it is the right thing to do Others (specify)	1 2 3 4 5 96	
25	When women are menstruating, can they do household puja?	Yes No	1 0	If "Yes" skip to 27

Q.N	Questions	Response	Code	Instruction
26	If no, why not? (tick one)	They don't feel well They fear divine retribution Their family members don't allow them They don't want to They feel it is the right thing to do Others (specify)	1 2 3 4 5 96	
27	When women are menstruating, can they touch male family members?	Yes No	1 0	If "Yes" skip to 29
28	If no, why not? (tick one)	They don't feel well They fear divine retribution Their family don't allow them They don't want to They feel it is the right thing to do Others (Specify)	1 2 3 4 96	
29	When women are menstruating can they cook/ enter the kitchen?	Yes No	1 0	If "Yes" skip to 31
30	If no why not? (tick one)	They don't feel well They fear divine retribution Their family don't allow them They don't want to They feel it is the right thing to do Others (Specify)	1 2 3 4 5 96	
31	When women are menstruating, can they go outside as much as normal?	Yes No	1 0	If "Yes" skip to 33
32	If no why not? (tick one)	They don't feel well They fear divine retribution Their family don't allow you They don't want to They feel it is the right thing to do Others (specify)	1 2 3 4 5 96	
33	When women are menstruating can they eat any foods or drinks? (i.e. eat without any restrictions)	Yes No	1 0	If "Yes" skip to 35

Q.N	Questions	Response	Code	Instruction
34	If no, why not? (tick one)	They make her feel unwell She wants to maintain balance (between heat and cold) in her body She fear divine retribution Her family members don't allow her They don't want to They feel it is the right thing to do She will have heavy menstrual bleeding Others (Specify)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 96	
35	When women are menstruating can they sleep in the same building as the rest of your family?	Yes No	1 0	If "Yes" skip to 37
36	If no why not? (tick one)	They don't feel well They fear divine retribution Their family don't allow them They don't want to They feel it is the right thing to do Others (specify)	1 2 3 4 5 96	
37	When women are menstruating can they sleep in the same bed as others?	Yes No	1 0	If "Yes" skip to 39
38	If no why not? (tick one)	They don't feel well They fear divine retribution Their family don't allow them They don't want to They feel it is the right thing to do Others (specify)	1 2 3 4 5 96	
39	Have you ever challenged, or helped challenge, household menstrual restrictions or taboos?	Yes No	1 0	
40	Have you ever challenged myths or misconceptions about menstruation in your household?	Yes No	1 0	
41	Have you ever participated in challenging community menstrual taboos or restrictions?	Yes No	1 0	
42	Have you ever challenged myths or misconceptions about menstruation in the community (outside your household)?	Yes No	1 0	

Q.N	Questions	Response	Code	Instruction
43	Do you feel able to challenge restrictions, taboos, myths or misconceptions in your home?	Yes No Don't know	1 0 98	
44	Do you feel able to challenge restrictions, taboos, myths, or misconceptions in your community?	Yes No Don't know	1 0 98	

Now we would like to ask you about girls at school and their menstruation

45	Are you aware when your female classmates are menstruating?	Yes No	1 0	If "No" skip to 48
46	Do girls behave differently around boys after they start menstruating?	Yes No Don't know	1 0 98	
47	Do boys behave differently around girls after girls start menstruating?	Yes No Don't know	1 0 98	
48	What are the activities that girls cannot do (should not do) when they are menstruating (tick all that apply)	They can do anything Sports Standing up in class to answer a question Going to the board to answer a question Others (Specify)	1 2 3 96	
49	What is the cause of menstruation?	Normal healthy process Internal bleeding Curse Bad blood being shed Supernatural reason Others (specify)	1 2 3 4 5 96	
50	What are the symptoms of menstruation?	Pain (all types) Tiredness Dizziness Others (Specify)	1 2 3 96	
51	From where do you get information about menstruation?	Teacher Male family members Female family members Health workers Friends Internet Child clubs/ Mentors/Young Champions Others (specify)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 96	
52	How useful was this information?	Useful Not very useful No use at all	1 2 3	
53	Have you ever received a class on sexual reproductive health and menstruation?	Yes No	1 0	If "no" skip to Q.N.57

54	Were you able to ask questions?	Yes No	1 0	
55	How did you find this class?	Embarrassing Interesting Dull Not useful Others (specify)	1 2 3 4 96	
56	How would you prefer to be taught this class?	Class disaggregated by gender Class not disaggregated by gender	1 2	
57	Is there a child club at your school?	Yes No Don't know	1 0 98	If no and don't know, skip to Q.N. 61
58	Have you ever been involved in any activities organised by the child club?	Yes No	1 0	
59	Has the child club done any menstrual hygiene related activities?	Yes No		
60	If yes, which activities?	Awareness raising Training on pad making Public events or advocacy Others (specific)	1 2 3	
61	Have you ever witnessed teasing of girls because of their menstruation?	Yes No	1 0	If no Stop the interview
62	How often in the past three months have you witnessed teasing of girls because of their menstruation?	Once a week Once a month Once in 2 months Once in 3 months Not experienced or observed in past 3 months	1 2 3 4 5	
63	Have you ever challenged teasing of girls because of their menstruation?	Yes No	1 0	

## Questionnaire 8: Semi-structure interview with girls

Interview date	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> / 2016 DD / MM / YYYY
Interviewer Name	
ID	
District Code	
VDC code	
School Code	
Type of school	WinS Intervention <input type="checkbox"/> Non-WinS <input type="checkbox"/>
Student name	
Class	

### Section 1 Socio demographic information

	Questions	Response	Code	Instruction
1	What is your complete age?	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>		
2	Caste/Ethnicity	Hill Dalit Terai Dalit Hill Janajati Terai Janajati Madhesi Muslim Brahmin/Chettri Others(Specify)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 96	
3	Religion	Hindu Muslim Buddhist Christian Others(Specify)	1 2 3 4 96	
4	Primary language	Maithali Nepali Bhojpuri Tamang Gurung Doteli Others (Specify)	1 2 3 4 5 6 96	
5	Would you describe yourself as disabled?	Yes No	1 0	
6	What level of education (Class) does your mother have?	None Below class 10 Class 10 and above University Don't know	1 2 3 4 98	
7	What level of education does your father have?	None Below class 10 Class 10 and above University Don't know	1 2 3 4 98	

8	What is the roof of your house made of?	Thatch/palm leaf/reed/grass	1	
		Bamboo	2	
		Planks/wood	3	
		Tiles/stones	4	
		Tin/Metals	5	
		Khapeta	6	
		Calamine/cement fibre	7	
		Cement Dhalan	8	
		(Other Specify)	96	
9	What is wall of your house made of?	Cane/Palm/trunks/Bamboos	1	
		Burnt brick and clay	2	
		Unburnt brick and clay	3	
		Bamboo and clay	4	
		Stone and clay	5	
		Plywood	6	
		Brick and cement	7	
		Stone and cement	8	
		Cement block	9	
		Others (Specify)	96	
10	Do you have toilet in your house?	Yes	1	If "No" skip to Q.N.13
		No	2	
11	What kind of toilet do you have?	Flush to septic tank	1	
		Flush to somewhere else	2	
		Pit latrine with slab	3	
		Pit latrine without slab/open pit	4	
		Others (Specify)	96	
12	Who else regularly uses your toilet?	Just the members of your family	1	
		Shared with other families	2	
13	If you don't have toilet, where do you go?	Open place	1	
		Field	2	
		Forest area	3	
		Neighbours toilet	4	
		Other (specify).....	96	
14	What is the source of water at your home?	Pipe water in compound	1	
		Tube well /bore hole water	2	
		River / spring source / pond	3	
		Community tap	4	
		Others (Specify)...	96	
15	Does your household have	Yes	No	Don't know
15a	Electricity	1	0	
15b	Solar	1	0	
15c	Radio	1	0	
15d	Television	1	0	
15e	Mobile phone	1	0	
15f	Computer	1	0	
15g	Livestock	1	0	
15h	Bank account	1	0	98

16	How has the earthquake affected your home?	No effect of earthquake	1	
		Minor cracks to home	2	
		Major damage to home	3	
		Major damage and living in temporary structure or others home due to earthquake	4	
		Others (Specify).....	96	

Menstruation – knowledge and sources of information

	Questions	Response	Code	Skip
17	What age were you when you started menstruating?	Age: Don't remember	98	
18	Did you know anything about menstruation before you started menstruating?	Yes No	1 0	If "No" skip to 21
19	Where did you get that information from? (multiple answer)	Mother Older Sister Older Sister in law Female cousin or other female relative Male relative Friend Teacher Book/magazine/health magazine Health Worker FCHV Radio TV Internet Mentor/Young Champion Other (Specify)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 96	
20	How useful was this information?	Useful Not very useful	1 2	
21	Who helped you manage your menstruation at first? (advised you what to do, advised you about what it was, advised you about what to use) (Single option - focus on who helped the most)	Mother Older Sister Older Sister in law Female cousin or other female relative Male relative Friend Teacher Health Worker FCHV Others (Specify)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 96	
22	When you first started menstruating, what did you believe was the cause of your menstruation?	Normal healthy process Any type of illness Internal bleeding Curse Bad blood being shed Supernatural reason Don't know Others (Specify)	1 2 3 4 5 6 98 96	



23	Now, what do you believe is the cause of your menstruation?	Normal healthy processes Any type of illness Internal bleeding Curse Bad blood being shed Supernatural reason Don't know Others (Specify)	1 2 3 4 5 6 98 96	
24	Since you first learned about menstruation, have you heard any more information?	Yes No	1 0	If "No" skip to 26
25	Where did you get that additional information from? (multiple option)	Mother Older Sister Older Sister in law Female cousin or other female relative Male relative Friend Teacher Book/magazine/health magazine Health Worker FCHV Radio TV Internet Child club/Young Champion/Mentors Other(Specify)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 96	
26	Who do you feel comfortable talking to about your menstruation?	Mother Older Sister Older Sister in law female relative Friend Mentors/Young Champions Teacher Health Worker FCHV Male family members Other(Specify)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 96	
27	Do you feel able to challenge myths of misconceptions about menstruation at home?	Yes No	1 0	
28	Have you ever challenged myths or misconceptions about menstruation at home?	Yes No	1 0	
29	Do you feel able to challenge myths or misconceptions about menstruation in the community?	Yes No	1 0	
30	Have you ever challenged myths or misconceptions about menstruation in the community?	Yes No	1 0	

## Managing Menstruation at Home

	Questions	Response	Code	Skip
	When you are menstruating,			
31	Can you attend temple?	Yes No	1 0	If "Yes" Skip to 32
31a	If no, why not? (main reason)	You don't feel well You fear divine retribution Your family don't allow you You don't want to You feel it is the right thing to do Other (Specify)	1 2 3 4 5	
32	Can you attend religious occasions (wedding, blessing, puja, bratabanda)?	Yes No	1 0	If "Yes" Skip to 33
32.a	If no, why not? (main reason)	You don't feel well You fear divine retribution Your family don't allow you You don't want to You feel it is the right thing to do Other (Specify)	1 2 3 4 5 96	
33	Can you do household puja?	Yes No	1 0	If "Yes" Skip to 34
33a	If no, why not? (main reason)	You don't feel well You fear divine retribution Your family members don't allow you You don't want to You feel it is the right thing to do Others (Specify)	1 2 3 4 5 96	
34	Can you touch male family members?	Yes No	1 0	If "Yes" Skip to 35
34a	If no, why not?	You will make the people you touch unwell You fear divine retribution Your family don't allow you You don't want to You feel it is the right thing to do Other (Specify)	1 2 3 4 5 96	
35	Can you cook/enter the kitchen?	Yes No	1 0	If "Yes" Skip to 36
35a	If no why not?	You don't feel well You fear divine retribution Your family don't allow you You don't want to You feel it is the right thing to do You will ruin the food Others (Specify)	1 2 3 4 5 6 96	

	Questions	Response	Code	Skip
36	Can you go outside as much as normal?	Yes No	1 0	If "Yes" Skip to 37
36a	If no why not?	You don't feel well You fear divine retribution Your family don't allow you You don't want to You feel it is the right thing to do Others (Specify)	1  2  3 4  5 96	
37	Can you eat any foods or drinks? (i.e. eat without any restrictions)	Yes No	1 0	If "Yes" Skip to 38
37a	If no, why not?	They make you feel unwell You want to maintain balance (between heat and cold) in your body You fear divine retribution Your family members don't allow you You don't want to You feel it is the right thing to do You will have heavy bleeding Others (Specify)	1  2  3 4 5  6  7 96	
38	Can you sleep in the same house as the rest of your family?	Yes No	1 0	If "Yes" Skip to 39
38a	If no why not?	You don't feel well You fear divine retribution Your family don't allow you You don't want to You feel it is the right thing to do Others (Specify)	1  2  3 4 5	
39	Can you sleep in the same bed as others?	Yes No	1 0	If "Yes" Skip to 39_1
39a	If no why not?	You don't feel well You fear divine retribution Your family don't allow you You don't want to You feel it is the right thing to do Others (Specify)	1  2  3 4  5	
39_1	Can you lift the heavy loads?	Yes No	1 0	If "Yes" Skip to 40

	Questions	Response	Code	Skip
39_1.i	If no why?	You don't feel well You feel hard Your family don't allow you You don't want to You feel it is the right thing to do Others (Specify)	1 2 3 4 5 96	
40	Have you ever challenged restrictions and taboos about menstruation at home?	Yes No	1 0	
41	Do you feel able to challenge restrictions and taboos about menstruation?	Yes No Don't know	1 0 98	
42	Which material do you usually use to manage your menstruation? (tick one only)	Cloth (reusable) Sanitary pads (disposable) Sanitary pads (reusable) Other	1 2 3 96	Skip to 48
43	If you use cloth is it old or new?	Old New	1 2	
44	How often do you use clean clothes?	Always Sometimes Never	1 2 3	
45	How often do you use dry clothes?	Always Sometimes Never	1 2 3	
46	If you use cloths, do you have somewhere private to wash them?	Yes No	1 0	
47	Where do you dry used cloth?	Outside home in sunlight in the Normal place where clothes are dried Outside home in the sunlight in a place away from view Outside home covered by other clothes Inside home in a normal place Inside home in a hidden place Inside home covered by other clothes By the fire Dry using hot iron Others (Specify)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 96	
48	Have you ever used sanitary pads?	Yes No	1 0	If "No" Skip to 52
49	If yes, how often do you use sanitary pads?	Always Usually Sometimes Rarely	1 2 3 4	
50	If yes, how did you get them?	Self-bought Relative bought Made them	1 2 3	

	Questions	Response	Code	Skip
51	If yes, where were they from	Retail shop Bazaar (town) shop Medical shop Women's group Others (specify)	1 2 3 4 96	
52	Is there a shop within 20 minutes walking distance of your home where you can buy sanitary pads?	Yes No Don't know	1 0 98	
53	If you have never used or rarely used sanitary pads, what are the reasons you do not use them? (Multiple choice)	Expensive Not easily available Difficult to dispose of Embarrassed to go and buy them Unsure of how to use them Never heard of them Other (Specify) Not applicable	1 2 3 4 5 6 96 9	
54	If you could choose one thing, what would you like best to manage your menstruation? (tick only one option)	Cloth (reusable) Sanitary pads (disposable) Sanitary pads (reusable) Other (Specify)	1 2 3 96	
55	Have you ever heard about reusable sanitary pads?	Yes No	1 0	If no, skip to 62
56	Have you ever learned how to make reusable sanitary pads?	Yes No	1 0	
57	Have you ever made reusable sanitary pads?	Yes No	1 0	
58	Have you ever bought reusable sanitary pads?	Yes No	1 0	If no, skip to 60
59	If yes, Where did you get the reusable sanitary pads?	Retail shop Medical shop Town market Women's group Friends School Health facility Others (Specify)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 96	
60	Have you ever used reusable sanitary pad?	Yes 1 No 2		If no, Skip to Q.N. 63
61	If you use reusable pads do you have somewhere private to wash them?	Yes No	1 0	

	Questions	Response	Code	Skip
62	Where do you dry reusable pad?	Outside home in sunlight in the Normal place where clothes are dried Outside home in the sunlight in a place away from view Outside home covered by other clothes Inside home in a normal place Inside home in a hidden place Inside home covered by other clothes By the fire Dry using hot iron Others (Specify)	1  2 3 4 5 6 7 8 96	
63	If you use disposable pads, cloths, reusable sanitary pad where and how do you dispose of them?	Burn them Throw away far from home Bury them in rubbish pit Bury them on land away from home Put them in toilet Throw away in ponds Throw them in the gutter Throw them in a stream Don't use disposables Others(specify)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 96	

#### Menstrual hygiene management in School

	Questions	Response	Code	Skip
64	In the past 3 months, how many days do you recall missing the whole day at school while you were menstruating? (excluding holidays, strikes)	Days (1 to 15) (if 0)		If "0" skip to 67
65	What were all the reasons that you missed a whole day at school (excluding holidays and strikes)?	Pain (any kind) Tiredness Family advise not to go to school Family prevent from going to school Heavy bleeding leading to fear of leakage Fear of teasing Toilet facilities inadequate for management (i.e. no water, no soap, too dark, no lock etc.) Nowhere to dispose of pads/cloths/napkins Had to go and get sanitary materials Others(specify)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 96	

	Questions	Response	Code	Skip
66	What was the main reason that you missed a whole day at school (excluding holiday and strikes)	Pain (cramps/headache/any kind of pain) Tiredness Family advise not to go to school Family prevent from going to school Fear of leakage Fear of teasing Toilet facilities inadequate for management (i.e. no water, no soap, too dark, no lock etc.) Nowhere to dispose of pads/cloths/napkins Had to go and get sanitary materials Others (Specify)	1   2  3 4 5  6  7  8	
67	During the last three months, how many days did you leave class for part of the day (one or more hours) because of your menstruation?	Number of days (1 to 15) If 0		If "0" Skip to 69
68	What was the main reason that you missed a part of the day at school because of your menstruation?	Pain Tiredness Family advise not to go to school Family prevent from going to school Fear of leakage Fear of teasing Toilet facilities inadequate for management (i.e. no water, no soap, too dark, no lock etc.) Nowhere to dispose of pads/cloths/napkins Had to go and get sanitary materials Other (Specify)	1 2 3  4 5 6   7  8 96	
69	When you start menstruating and you are at school, how do you usually manage? (Single option)	You do nothing Use materials that you brought with you Ask friends for materials Ask teacher for materials Go to a nearby school shop and buy materials Go home change and come back Go home change and stay at home Others (Specify)	1  2 3 4 5 6  7 96	

	Questions	Response	Code	Skip
70	If you have to leave the school compound during your menstruation who do you ask?	No-one Male /Female Class teacher Other teacher (including head teacher) Male/Female Class representative Others (Specify)	1 2 3 4 96	If "1" skip to 72
71	Would you tell them the reason you had to leave school compound?	Yes No	1 0	
72	Are there sanitary materials (pads/cloths) available for you to use at school if you need to?	Yes No Don't know	1 0 98	
73	Who do you feel comfortable asking for sanitary materials to manage your menstruation?	Male teacher Female teacher Friends Not comfortable / no-one Other	1 2 3 4 96	
74	During your last period, how often did you change your menstruation materials (pad/ cloths) in a day at school? (Reason like unavailability of water, toilet, sanitary materials, not feel comfortable to change sanitary materials at school etc.)	Never it's not necessary Never because of another reason Number of times they change (open)	88 77	
75	Do you have permission to use the toilet during class?	Always Sometimes Never	1 2 3	
76	Can you use the toilet during break?	Always Sometimes Never	1 2 3	
77	Do you ever wash your sanitary materials at school?	Yes No Don't use reusable materials	1 0 2	79 78 80
78	Why don't you wash your sanitary materials at school? (tick all that are applicable)	No proper place to wash them No water Use disposable cloths/pads Nowhere to dry them No soap Other(specify)	1 2 3 4 5 96	
79	Where do you dry the menstruation materials?	At school toilet In private place on school grounds At home Other (specify)..... Not applicable	1 2 3 96 9	
80	When you are menstruating how comfortable do you feel playing sports?	Comfortable Not comfortable No sports at school/don't play sports	1 2 3	
81	When you are menstruating how often do you feel you can sit in the front of the classroom?	Always Sometimes Never	1 2 3	



	Questions	Response	Code	Skip
82	When you are menstruating how often do you feel you can focus on what the teacher is saying?	Always Sometimes Never	1 2 3	
83	When you are menstruating how often do you feel you can do your classwork?	Always Sometimes Never	1 2 3	
84	When you are menstruating how often do you feel you can answer questions when called on?	Always Sometimes Never	1 2 3	
85	When you are menstruating how often do you feel you can raise your hand to answer when the teacher asks a question?	Always Sometimes Never	1 2 3	
86	When you are menstruating how often do you feel you can stand up to answer a question?	Always Sometimes Never	1 2 3	
87	When you are menstruating how often do you feel you can write on the board if you are asked?	Always Sometimes Never	1 2 3	
88	When you are menstruating how often do you feel you can stay in class the whole time?	Always Sometimes Never	1 2 3	
89	When you are menstruating how often do you feel you can stay at school the whole day?	Always Sometimes Never	1 2 3	
90	When you are menstruating how often do you feel you can go to school?	Always Sometimes Never	1 2 3	
91	When you are menstruating how often do you feel you can do your homework?	Always Sometimes Never	1 2 3	
92	When you have your period in school, do you feel comfortable being in the class with boys?	Yes No	1 2	
93	When you have your period in school do you worry about being teased?	Yes No	1 2	If "No" skip to 95
94	If you worry about being teased, who are you worried will tease you? (multiple choice)	Girls Boys Female Teachers Male Teachers Others(Specify)	1 2 3 4 96	
95	Have you ever challenged teasing because of menstruation?	Yes No	1 0	
96	Do you feel able to challenge teasing because of menstruation?	Yes No Don't know	1 0 98	

	Questions	Response	Code	Skip
97	When you have your period in school, how often do you have leaks?	Always Sometimes Never	1 2 3	If "No" skip to 99
98	If you have leakage when you are at school, what do you do?	Stay at school Go home, change and come back Go home, change and stay at home Others (specify)	1 2 3 96	
99	Have you ever experienced teasing or observed teasing of girls about menstruation?	Yes No	1 0	If "No" skip to 102.
100	How often have you experienced teasing, or observed teasing of girls about menstruation in the past 3 months?	Once a week Once a month Once in 2 months Once in 3 months Not experienced or observed in past 3 months	1 2 3 4 5	If option 5, skip to 102
101	If you have ever seen teasing, who has done the teasing? (Multiple options)	Girls Boys Female Teachers Male Teachers Others(Specify)	1 2 3 4 96	
102	Have you ever received a class on sexual reproductive health and menstruation?	Yes No	1 0	If "No" 107
103	Who taught this class?	Health teacher Other teacher Health worker Others (specify)	1 2 3 96	
104	Were you able to ask questions?	Yes No	1 0	
105	How did you find this class?	Embarrassing Interesting Dull Not useful Other	1 2 3 4 96	
106	How would you prefer to be taught this class?	Class disaggregated by gender Class not disaggregated by gender	1 2	
107	Is there a child club at your school?	Yes No Don't know	1 0 98	End the interview
108	Have you ever been involved in any activities organised by the child club?	Yes No	1 0	
109	Has the child club done any menstrual hygiene related activities?	Yes No	1 0	
110	If yes, which activities?	Awareness raising Training on pa making Public events or advocacy Others (specific)	1 2 3 96	

Thank You!

## Questionnaire 9: Individual Diary – Girls

### Field Diary

Months:

Date and day (prefilled)	1 <sup>st</sup> Week							2 <sup>nd</sup> week						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Menstruation days (please mark x if you menstruated)														
Were you present at school? (mark P if present, or A for absent, or Absent for at least one hour (H))														
Time off school in hours (approximate number of hours missed school)														
<b>Reasons for being absent (mark x for the reason you were absent)</b>														
School holiday														
Pain														
Tiredness														
Tiredness														
No adequate toilet facility at school														
Fear of leakage														
Fear or presence of teasing														
Lack of sanitary disposal facilities														
Lack of sanitary pad/cloth														
There is temple in school or on the way to school														
Other menstruation related														
Other non menstruation related														

Date and day (prefilled)	3rd Week							4th week						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Menstruation days (please mark x if you menstruated)														
Were you present at school? (mark P if present, or A for absent, or Absent for at least one hour (H))														
Time off school in hours (approximate number of hours missed school)														
<b>Reasons for being absent (mark x for the reason you were absent)</b>														
School holiday														
Pain														
Tiredness														
No adequate toilet facility at school														
Fear of leakage														
Fear or presence of teasing														
Lack of sanitary disposal facilities														
Lack of sanitary pad/cloth														
There is temple in school or on the way to school														
Other menstruation related														
Other non menstruation related														

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