Menstrual Stigma

Why does it matter?

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Stigma: A working definition

- "A set of – often unfair - negative beliefs & attitudes that people have about something,"

www.merriam-webster.com
Discomfort because of it is associated with sexuality & reproduction

Shame because of girls' inability to manage effectively

Exclusion because it is associated with dirt & pollution

Menstrual Stigma: Does it matter?

Hinders ability to carry out everyday activities

Weakens self-esteem & self-confidence

Conditions poor health-care seeking

Menstrual Stigma: Does it matters?

Core assets
(Adolescent development)

**Competence** – abilities to do specific things
**Confidence** – sense that one can do something and positive sense of self worth
**Connection** – positive bonds with people & institutions
**Character** – sense of right & wrong, & respect for standards of right behaviour
**Caring** – sense of sympathy & empathy for others

Girls need:

• To be well educated about menstruation
• To grow & develop in a context that sees menstruation as healthy & positive, not shameful & dirty
• To have access to sanitary products, running water, functional toilets & privacy for self care
• To be cared for & supported by their families when they have their menstrual periods
• To be able to consult a competent & caring health worker when they have menstrual health problems