

BEHAVIOUR 1: WASH HANDS WITH SOAP AND WATER

Behaviour to promote

Everyone should wash their hands with soap and water after defecation or after cleaning a child who has defecated, before eating and before handling food. Wash small children's hands with water and soap before they eat and after defecation.

Facilitate the use of kettles containing soap and water in each compound and/or near the latrines.

Reasons

UNICEF estimates that if people wash their hands with soap, the rate of infant morbidity from diarrheal diseases could be reduced by nearly 50%. According to 2010 DHS data, 72% of rural households have a place to wash hands, but the availability of soap and water at these households was only observed in 8% of cases. 40% of the households only had water. In the North, Sahel, West, Central and South Central regions, only half (44 to 52%) of rural households have such a place.

Barriers to behaviour change

Although people washing their hands with just water is common practice, **the use of soap is not a widespread practice.** Washing hands **with soap** is not yet an established habit.

Either people believe that using soap is not necessary (water is sufficient) or they forget to use soap. Sometimes parents hide the soap, out of fear that the neighbours might steal it or the children might waste it.

Half of rural households report that they have insufficient income to buy soap regularly. However, most households have some kind of soap but it is generally used for laundry or clothes.

We need to help young children to wash their hands with soap. This is sometimes difficult because children are not always in the presence of parents.

Contributing factors to behaviour change

Most women (UNICEF 2010) say that you should wash your hands **to remove dirt and they associate removing dirt with preventing disease.** They also justified washing hands by the need to be clean, but not specifically to getting rid of germs.

Other important reasons are: the habit of washing hands before eating to kill germs (removing dirt that causes diseases and can enter the body via the hands) to remove a bad smell, and the habit of washing hands after using the toilet.

In what situations do we wash our hands? The most common (88%); **before and after meals.** Less common; before preparing or serving food, when they think their hands are dirty, after using a latrine, after touching a dirty object, and after cleaning a child.

There is already a standard for washing around meals. At mealtimes, when women cook and at Muslim prayer times are the main times when people wash their hands with plain water. It is a simple and easy gesture.

BEHAVIOUR 2: DISPOSAL OF FAECES

Behaviour to promote

Remove all faeces (including the faeces of babies and small children) after defecation, in a hygienic way, from the environment and/or compound. Either by using latrines or by using pots for young children or burying the stools outside the compound.

Reasons

About 1.4 million children die each year from infectious diarrhoea and other diseases related to poor sanitation (nearly 5,000 per day), of which 90% are children under five years. Human waste can pass germs such as shigellosis, typhoid, cholera, other common gastrointestinal infections and certain respiratory infections. If faeces are not disposed of in a sanitary manner, they can contaminate children in several ways: water, food, cooking utensils, surfaces where food is served, and hands.

According to DHS in 2010, 78.5% of rural households do not have toilets but 21% have access to a toilet, such as a cesspit with a slab, shared or not, or a cesspit without a slab (an open pit).

Barriers to behaviour change

Many people believe that the faeces produced by children who are breastfed are less hazardous to health than the stools of adults, so they handle them without caution.

Babies and young children are often allowed to defecate anywhere in the compound. Sometimes parents are afraid that the children will fall into the hole of the latrine. Little children use a pot to defecate in but it is not always clean.

The majority of compounds in rural areas do not have latrines. People defecate in bushes because it is "tradition", for privacy reasons and to use the faeces as fertilizer in the fields. They don't have latrines because they are believed to be very expensive and having a latrine will identify them as "rich".

Some people use neighbours' latrines, but some are uncomfortable using other people's latrines, or reserve the latrine for old people. Some do not understand the benefits of latrines and there are some taboos on the use of latrines, for example, that women should not use the same latrines as men during menstruation.

Even if latrines are available, there are other barriers to their use, such as the smell or lack of maintenance. Other people will avoid latrines out of shame: if they move towards the latrine, everyone will know they are going to defecate. This is one reason why some prefer to defecate in the bush, in private, away from spectators.

Although in the rainy season most people who relieve themselves in the wild will bury their faeces and the objects they used to clean themselves, in the dry season most people will not dig small holes for this purpose.

Contributing factors to behaviour change

Strengthen the association between faeces, dirt, and diarrheal diseases. Avoiding dirt will prevent more diseases.

People see faeces as the most disgusting substance they know. Although people are embarrassed to talk about it, this disgust may encourage hygienic defecating.

More and more projects are in place in Burkina Faso to help the villagers to build latrines.