



A1 HIDDEN ISSUES – INFORMATION FOR FACILITATORS

Revealing the need for sanitation: information for facilitators

Tools in this section of *Reveal* provide background information on hidden issues for facilitators. Tools in other sections are designed to be used with

Questions for a facilitator to consider:

Does everybody in your community have a latrine or toilet? Does anybody have one? Where do people defecate? Are there latrines in the health centre and in the schools? Is 'sanitation' (the safe management of human waste) talked about?

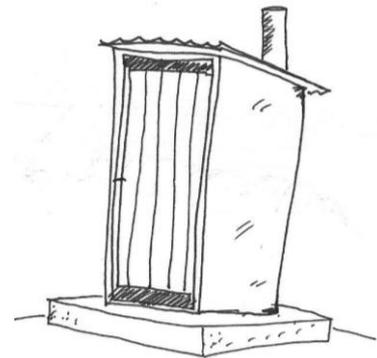
Managing and disposing of human waste safely is vital to the health, dignity and safety of communities. It affects children's education and people's ability to earn a livelihood. Yet, one in three people in the world do not have a safe, clean and private toilet.

Poor sanitation – when people defecate (go to the toilet) in the open, or use latrines or toilets that are unclean or unsafe – leads to sickness and diarrhoeal diseases.



Diarrhoeal diseases are the second most common cause of death among young children in developing countries. A child dies every 20 seconds as a result of them – making them a bigger killer than AIDS, malaria and measles combined.

However, despite this, sanitation is something that people are often embarrassed to talk about. In this way, it is a 'hidden issue'. It may be important to help the community you are working with to understand the importance of sanitation for good health and quality of life. Sanitation needs to become '*revealed*' so that communities can address the issue and ensure everyone has access to a safe, clean and private latrine or toilet.



A1 HIDDEN ISSUES – REVEALING THE NEED FOR SANITATION

What does the Bible say?

Jesus came so that we might have life, and life in all its fullness (John 10:10). This includes living in dignity and safety. The Bible is clear that God cares for people who are weak and suffering. Continuing with poor sanitation that leads to illness and death, particularly among children, cannot be God's will.

In Deuteronomy 23:12–14, God speaks through Moses to the Israelites about the safe removal of excreta (human waste). This command was given so that the camp would be kept holy (verse 14), but the practice would also have kept the camp healthy. Infections such as dysentery, diarrhoea, intestinal worms, typhoid fever and ringworm are a result of bad hygiene practices, and these can be prevented.

For Bible studies on this issue, please see **Section B** of *Reveal*.

Understanding sanitation

Faeces (poo) and urine (wee) are waste products from our bodies. Everybody produces them! Our faeces are full of microbes (tiny living organisms) that can cause diarrhoea and other diseases. People often think that children's faeces are not harmful, but this isn't true. Children's faeces actually have many *more* microbes than adult faeces. This is because children often ingest more germs (or pathogens) than adults, for example, off the floor. Their immune system is also weaker, so that pathogens live longer in their stomachs.

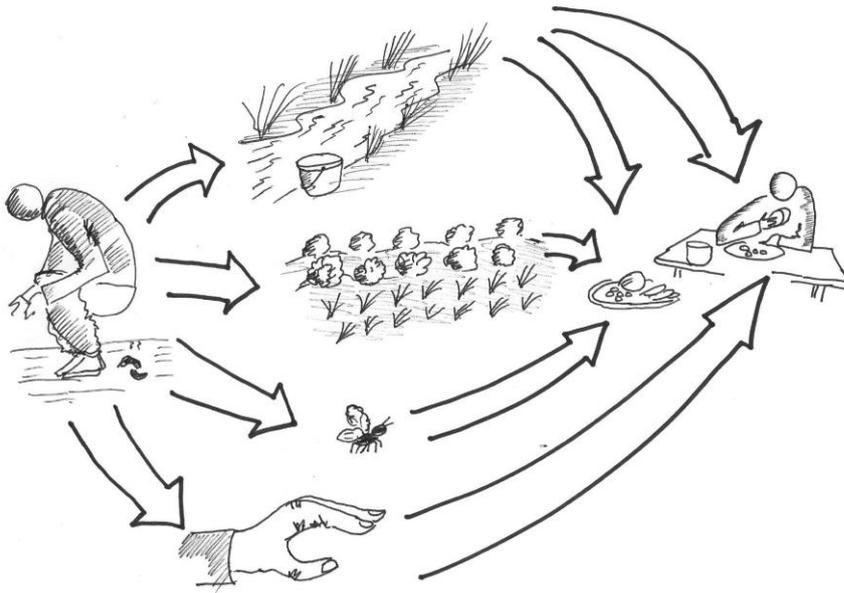
These microbes can be on our hands. They can also be spread by flies or through water. Even if our hands look clean, they may still have microbes on them - we just cannot see them! Illness occurs when these microbes get into people's mouths. There are several main ways in which this can happen, but all of them begin with faeces.

- If we do not use a latrine, or if the latrines we use are not clean and safe, microbes from faeces can get into our water supplies and then into our mouths, either because we drink the water or eat food washed in this water.
- Microbes from faeces left near crops can get onto the fruit and vegetables that we eat.
- Flies can carry microbes from faeces and then land on a plate of food that we eat.
- After passing faeces, unwashed hands will carry microbes either into our mouths or onto food.

The picture on the following page shows these different ways that faeces can enter our mouths.

Awareness-raising
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Conflict & peace-building
Corruption & governance
Disaster risk management
Discrimination & inclusion
Food & livelihoods
Gender & sexual violence
Health & HIV
Influencing decision-makers
Migration & trafficking
Water, sanitation & hygiene

The Sanitation Cycle



[Source: PILLARS (2005) *Encouraging good hygiene and sanitation*]

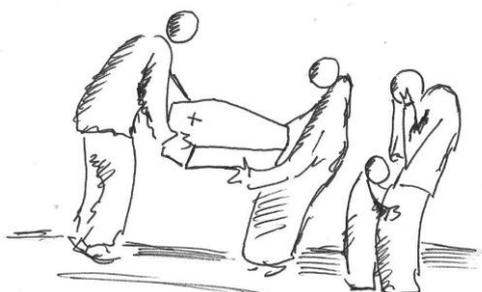
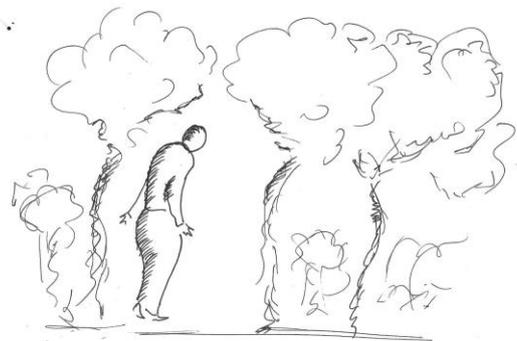
The importance of hygiene



Hygiene and sanitation are closely linked. Washing our hands with soap will remove the harmful microbes from faeces. Hands should be washed frequently, especially after going to the toilet, before handling food and after handling children’s faeces.

How does poor sanitation and hygiene affect people?

For millions of women, lack of access to safe and private sanitation is a source of shame, physical discomfort and insecurity. Many women are only able to defecate at night, when they are vulnerable to physical assault.



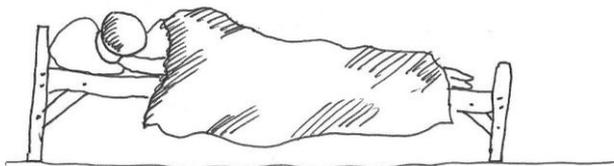
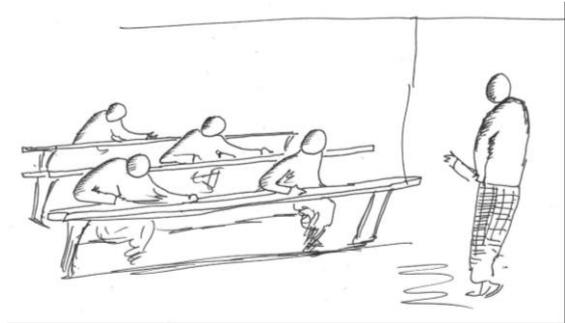
Poor sanitation and hygiene lead to illness and death among young children.

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If children are sick, they cannot attend school. Their education suffers. Diseases from poor sanitation even affect a child's ability to learn.



If adults are sick, they cannot work and earn an income.

However, safe sanitation and hygiene bring dignity and hope to communities. They are essential for development, education, health and livelihoods. It is very important that communities recognise the importance of sanitation and that communities are empowered and inspired to take action.



Using Reveal

Please see **Section C2** for tools giving advice on issues related to water, sanitation and hygiene, and **Section B** for Bible studies on the issues.



Finding out more

- Tearfund (2015) Footsteps 97 – *Hygiene and sanitation*
http://tilz.tearfund.org/en/resources/publications/footsteps/footsteps_91-100/footsteps_97/
- Tearfund (2007) Footsteps 73 – *Sanitation*
http://tilz.tearfund.org/en/resources/publications/footsteps/footsteps_71-80/footsteps_73/
- Tearfund (2005) PILLARS Guide – *Encouraging good hygiene and sanitation*
http://tilz.tearfund.org/en/resources/publications/pillars/encouraging_good_hygiene_and_sanitation/

Related tools:

- B – Hygiene (Bible study) [*B: Water, sanitation & hygiene-1*]
- B – Sanitation (Bible study) [*B: Water, sanitation & hygiene-2*]
- C2 – Choosing and building latrines [*C2: Water, sanitation & hygiene-4*]