

# SANITATION

## Key messages

- Sanitation refers to all measures that help break the cycle of diseases.
- Sanitation involves the isolation of excreta from the environment, maintenance of personal hygiene, safe disposal of solid and liquid waste, safe drinking water chain and vector control.
- Sanitation involves more collective decision making processes both at household and community levels.
- Poor sanitary conditions increase exposure to risks of incidences and spread of infectious diseases.
- Diarrhoea, in an environment of poor hygiene and inadequate sanitation spreads easily.
- Sanitation promotion involves combination of linkages or relationships between the hygiene domains and the improved water and sanitation facilities.

## What you need to do in your community

- Visit the houses to map the sanitation situation. (Tool: Community map).
- Talk with the elders, leaders and families about their needs in sanitation.
- Identify persons/CBO/ government and other community resource persons who can participate in this project.
- Organize the community into groups where they will be involved in identifying health problems caused by lack of proper sanitation. (Tool: Community mapping).
- Assist the communities to analyze their problems through selecting good /bad sanitation practices. (Tool: Three pile sorting).
- Help the community also to identify the oral faecal transmission routes within the community. (Tool: Transmission routes).
- Together with the community, plan for solutions to the sanitation problems within the community. (Tool: Story with a gap).
- Assist the community to analyze the roles of women and men in the community. (Tool: Gender role analysis).
- Select barriers to block faecal oral transmission. (Tool: Blocking the routes).
- Assist the community to select options for choosing sanitation improvements/ options within their community. (Tool: Sanitation ladder, three pile sorting).
- Help the community to plan for actions and who is to do what.
- Together with the community identify what could go wrong when implementing the actions and how it can be solved. (Tool: Planning tools).
- Help the community to come up with community monitoring plans where they can be able to check their progress.



## For a volunteer to promote sanitation you should

- Increase the awareness of the community on the benefits of sanitation.
- Promote proper use of the available sanitation facilities.
- Promote use of affordable and appropriate sanitation technology.

## What to consider when selecting sanitation technology for the community

- Affordable costs.
- Improving functionality - (privacy, dignity, safety) of the latrine.
- Sustainability.
- Affordability and availability of materials.
- Community-based maintenance technology.
- Attractiveness and culturally acceptability.

## Key messages when planning sanitation in schools

- Hand washing basins (facilities) with clean water and soap must be provided in each toilet block.
- Toilet facilities should be cleaned with soap or disinfectant at the end of every day.
- Refuse must be disposed of safely and regularly.
- The needs of the users and the resources available should be carefully considered to ensure that the most appropriate type of sanitation is selected.
- Provide special wash rooms for girls, especially during their menstruation period.
- Provide toilets which afford easy access to the disabled children in schools.

## What you should do when considering school sanitation

- Ensure that sanitation facilities in schools are sufficient for the number of students and staff members.
- Ensure that there are separate blocks for male and female students and for male and female staff.
- Separate facilities built for male and female staff.
- Ensure also that sanitary urinals for boys are provided separately, independent of the toilet seats, and are designed for more intensive use.
- Washing facilities should be available at these places.

## What to consider when constructing a good hygienic latrine

- The toilet should be easy to clean.
- Should not encourage flies.
- Should be child friendly.
- Should be at least 10m from the house but should be easily accessible especially at night.
- Should provide privacy.
- Should have a firm floor, a good super structure and a weather proof roof.
- Should have a hand washing facility.

## Standards and specifications for construction of a pit latrine

- A family pit latrine should be about 1.2 m diameter or square, with the pit wholly above the water table (a minimum 1.5 metre above the water table).
- It should be at least 3m deep and if not possible to attain this depth, the floor level of the building above it should be raised above ground level.
- Choose a site which is not prone to flooding.
- Use the local material and expertise to construct the latrine.
- For hygiene purposes, there should be soap (or any other local detergent) and water near all latrines.

## Minimum distances of latrines to other facilities

- Latrines should be at a minimum of 30 metres downstream from any drinking water source to avoid contamination.
- World Health Organization recommends a distance of at least 50m from water.
- A reasonable distance from dwellings of not less than 5m (because of possible smell problems) or more than 50m (for convenience).
- Latrines - especially the improvised types - should be downwind of dwellings.
- Position the latrine after the dwelling along the general direction of the wind.
- When digging a pit, leave at least 1.5 metres between the bottom of the pit and the top of the water table.

## Guideline on how to compute minimum dimensions for a pit latrine

- Assume one person gives  $0.04\text{m}^3$  (40 litres) of solids per year (varies with individuals).
- For 25 people you will need a pit volume of at least  $1\text{m}^3$  per year of use. ( $25 \times 0.04\text{m}^3 = 1.00\text{m}^3$ )
- Thus for a toilet of 25 people to last 20 years the minimum volume will be 20 cubic metres, and dimensions should be 1m wide x 2m long x 10m deep. The width and length should be enough to allow a person to dig and move around.
- Leave an additional 50 cm of depth from the surface in calculating the pit volume (to put soil back once it is full).
- In a school with 500 students, a set of 20 such latrines will be needed.