Reducing the spread of COVID-19 through handwashing promotion

Ideas and rapid actions that can be done by local level actors in low and middle income settings.

Wash'Em
What is **Wash’Em**?

A process for rapidly designing evidence-based and context-adapted handwashing behaviour change programmes in emergencies.

1. Learn about the rapid assessment tools
2. Do the rapid assessment tools
3. Input data in Wash’Em software
4. Get context-specific hygiene program recommendations
Handwashing with soap – our best defence against coronavirus

The global spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) has resulted in public officials and mainstream media encouraging people to wash their hands with soap as regularly as possible. The simple act of handwashing, along with other important health measures like mask-wearing, can significantly limit the spread of the virus.

In this guide, we give you practical tips on how to encourage community-level handwashing behaviour with the aim of containing and preventing the spread of the coronavirus. This guide is not a technical brief about COVID-19, please refer to reliable resource such as the WHO or UNICEF for this information. If you are working on water, sanitation or hygiene we recommend you read the technical brief also.

How to change handwashing behaviour?

- Make sure people know the benefits of handwashing. Simple things like this, people all around the world often ask do handwashing handwashing with soap as regularly as possible. The simple act of handwashing can significantly limit the spread of the virus.

- People sometimes don’t practice handwashing because it is inconvenient or because they have other priorities. Go to a handwashing handwashing behaviour instead of creating an enabling environment, establish simple handwashing activities and make it easier to do handwashing.

What is WashEm and how does it relate to coronavirus?

WashEm provides guidance on how to change handwashing behaviour with soap on a large scale. The WashEm platform combines rapid assessment tools to learn about the determinants of handwashing behaviour with soap on a large scale. The WashEm platform combines rapid assessment tools to learn about the determinants of handwashing behaviour with soap on a large scale.

How to use WashEm?

- Have a handwashing handwashing behaviour with soap on a large scale.

Website: washem.info
Overview

Part 1: General principles to guide your response

Part 2: simple actions to promote handwashing
Handwashing promotion is critical but should not be the only component of coronavirus response.

- Other hygiene measures
- Social distancing
- Health seeking processes & COVID-19 help lines
- Social support
- Challenging misconceptions
Stay informed through reliable sources

- WHO
- National Department of Health
- CDC
- Major international media organisations.
Involving Others in Your Response:

- Businesses
- Community leaders
- Social or religious organisations

1) Get businesses and groups to prioritise looking after their employees/community members.
2) Identify key skills that could help in the effort.
3) Set up communication mechanisms.
4

Don’t put your staff or the community at risk

- Avoid all large community gatherings.
- Focus on mass media social media and infrastructure.
- Assess risk locally before doing household visits.
- Make sure staff are able to practice hand hygiene.
Keep handwashing messaging simple

• Wash hands frequently
• Wash hands thoroughly with lots of soap for 20 seconds
Simple actions to promote handwashing
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Handwashing facilities and soap

- In locations where people gather
- Entrances to buildings
- Where food is prepared or eaten
- Must have soap!
- Must be maintained
Cue behaviour

Make handwashing automatic, hard to avoid, socially judged and desirable.
Change messaging and keep it fun and surprising.

The future is in your hands • Don’t get caught germy handed. • Drown a bug, save a life. • So you want to change the world – start by washing your hands! • Stop! Handwashing is practiced here. • Washed hands are caring hands. • What are the top ten carriers of infection? Answer: each one of your fingers. • Did you know germs can live on your hands for 3 days? • Lifesaving soap available here • Clean up your act • See sink? Use soap • Don’t be a dirty soap dodger • Is the person next to you washing with soap? • Note: This soap is not just for decoration • Take a moment to refresh – wash hands with soap • Others are watching – better wash your hands • Happiness is: being around people who clean their hands • What have you just touched? • Did you know there are 3200 germs on your hands right now! • Unwashed hands. Eewww! • Clean hands deserve two thumbs up • Clean hands make the world go round. • Stop - in the name of soap - before you break my heart!
Make handwashing normative.

#SafeHands
#Handwashing Hero
Remind people that soap is incredible!
Challenge misconceptions with real experiences
Website: washem.info
Email: support@washem.info

Social media: For more ideas and the latest news from around the world

Mailing list: For updates on the tools, training materials and software release.