Understanding Baby WASH and Its Importance

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What is Baby WASH?

Baby WASH is the idea that an integrated approach is better than a siloed approach for children in the first 1,000 days of life.

1. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)
2. Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (MNCH)
3. Nutrition
4. Early Childhood Development (ECD)

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Baby WASH Target Areas

WASH

- WASH in health care facilities
- Clean hands at key times
- Access to adequate, safe drinking water supply
- Consistent, sanitary toilet usage & proper disposal of feces (children & animals)
- Personal and household Hygiene practices

ECD

- Protected, safe and sanitary baby/child-friendly spaces for exploration and play
- Hygiene for baby/child (regular bathing, handwashing, sanitary play and mouthing/teething objects)
- Clean and protected eating spaces for babies and young children

MNCH

- Clean births
- Skilled birth attendants
- Hygienic maternal self-care
- Resources in place for clean, rapid emergency response
- Appropriate communication with mothers, birth companions and families
- Comprehensive essential newborn care

Nutrition

- Exclusive breastfeeding 6 months
- Safe food handling and protected eating spaces
- Treated drinking water >6 months
- Freshly cooked, diverse, and nutritious foods

Quality of Care and WASH

Lack of WASH services compromises the ability to provide basic services, such as safe childbirth and surgery, and prevent hospital acquired infections

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Why Baby WASH? Challenges Faced by Young Children

Key Statistics

1. Chronic Malnutrition:

220 million children under five suffer from stunting (WHO, 2023).

In sub-Saharan Africa, nearly one-third of children are affected by stunting (UNICEF, 2022).

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Challenges Faced by Young Children

Key Statistics

2. Diarrheal Diseases:

- **Diarrhea is a leading cause of childhood illness and mortality (UNICEF, 2020).**
- Unsafe WASH are responsible for the **deaths of around 1000 children under five every day**. (WHO, 2023)
- **The burden of diarrhea varies significantly across regions (Christopher T et al., 2017).**

DRC Context:

- **45 million diarrhea episodes occur annually among children under five.**
- **Diarrhea is responsible for 10% of child deaths in DRC (Christopher T et al., 2017; UNICEF, 2018).**

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Challenges Faced by Young Children

Root Causes:

- Strongly linked to poverty and inadequate WASH infrastructure (Pruss-Ustun, A et al., 2014; Wolf J et al., 2014).
- Unsafe water and inadequate sanitation are major contributors (UNICEF, 2023).
- Lack of caregiver awareness is a significant risk factor for diarrheal disease among children (Christopher T et al., 2017).

Solutions:

- WASH Programs: Water treatment, safe storage, and handwashing can reduce diarrhea by 30–75% (Wolf J et al., 2018).

The Core Principles of BabyWASH

Content: Integration, Life Cycle and Equity

- **Integration:** BabyWASH recognizes the interconnection of WASH, nutrition, health, and early childhood development and promotes collaboration among sectors to achieve shared goals.
- **Life Cycle:** By focusing on the first 1000 days, BabyWASH targets critical windows of opportunity for interventions that have a lasting impact on child health and development.
- **Equity:** BabyWASH prioritizes reaching the most vulnerable and marginalized populations, ensuring that all children have equal opportunities to thrive.

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Key Interventions of Baby WASH

- **Exclusive breastfeeding:** Provides essential nutrients and antibodies, protecting infants from infections and promoting healthy growth.
- **Improved hand hygiene:** Reduces the transmission of diarrheal and respiratory diseases through regular handwashing with soap.
- **Access to safe water:** Ensures the availability of clean water for drinking, cooking, and hygiene practices.
- **Latrine construction:** Improves sanitation conditions and reduces the risk of waterborne diseases.
- **Supplementary feeding:** Provides additional nutrients to children with malnutrition, supporting their recovery and growth.
- **Community education:** Empowers communities to adopt healthy behaviors and practices, creating sustainable change.

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Benefits of BabyWASH

- BabyWASH has demonstrated significant improvements in child health and development outcomes, including reduced mortality rates, Enteropathy, Diarrhea, Undernutrition, and Contamination in the Environment
- By addressing the underlying causes of child morbidity and mortality, BabyWASH contributes to building resilient communities and achieving Sustainable Development Goals.
- Evidence from various countries and contexts supports the effectiveness of BabyWASH in improving the lives of young children.

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Call to Action

- Join the BabyWASH movement to create a healthier future for children.
- Support initiatives that promote WASH, nutrition, and early childhood development.
- Advocate for policies that prioritize the well-being of young children.
- Partner with organizations working to implement BabyWASH programs

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REDUCE Program: Evidence-Based Baby WASH Interventions: Cohort study –RCT (Randomized Controlled Trial)

REDUCE Program: Evidence-Based Baby WASH Interventions

Overview:

Program Name: REDUCE (Reducing Enteropathy, Diarrhea, Undernutrition, and Contamination in the Environment)

Funded by: USAID

Partnership: Johns Hopkins School of Public Health & Food for the Hungry

Study Location: Walungu Territory, South Kivu, DRC

Objective: "To identify and address exposure pathways to fecal pathogens in children, reducing fecal contamination and improving child health."

Key Findings:

Challenges: Traditional WASH interventions (latrines, handwashing, water treatment) showed limited success in reducing diarrhea, enteropathy, and improving child growth in large trials.

Exposure Pathways: Children's mouthing behavior, contact with feces, and interaction with animals (rabbits, guinea pigs) significantly contribute to poor growth and health.

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REDUCE Program: Evidence-Based Baby WASH Interventions

Research Components:

- **Cohort Study**: 433 children under five tracked for 6 months.
- **Baseline Assessments**: Child height, weight, mouthing behavior, and WASH conditions.
- **Formative Research:** 91 interviews, 6 focus groups, and pilot interventions in 102 households.

Goal: To develop scalable, child-focused WASH interventions beyond traditional methods, reducing environmental contamination and improving child health in vulnerable populations.

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REDUCE Program: Evidence-Based Baby WASH Interventions

Intervention Development

Six REDUCE Baby WASH Care Group modules were developed based on formative research findings and covered the following topics:

1. Modules on reducing child mouthing of contaminated objects(Reducing Geophagy).
2. Animal hutches to separate children from animals.
3. Handwashing with soap at keys Moments
4. Water treatment
5. Food Storage
6. Child feces disposal

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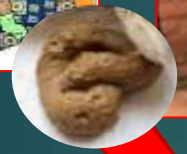
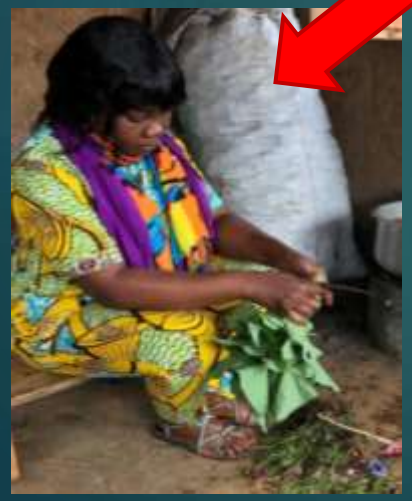
Module on reducing child mouthing of contaminated objects.

Living with animals; show how to build Animal Hutches

Handwashing with soap at keys moments





Handwashing with soap at keys moments















Water treatment

5.1a Hatari kwa kutumiya maji yenye kuwa nabuchafu

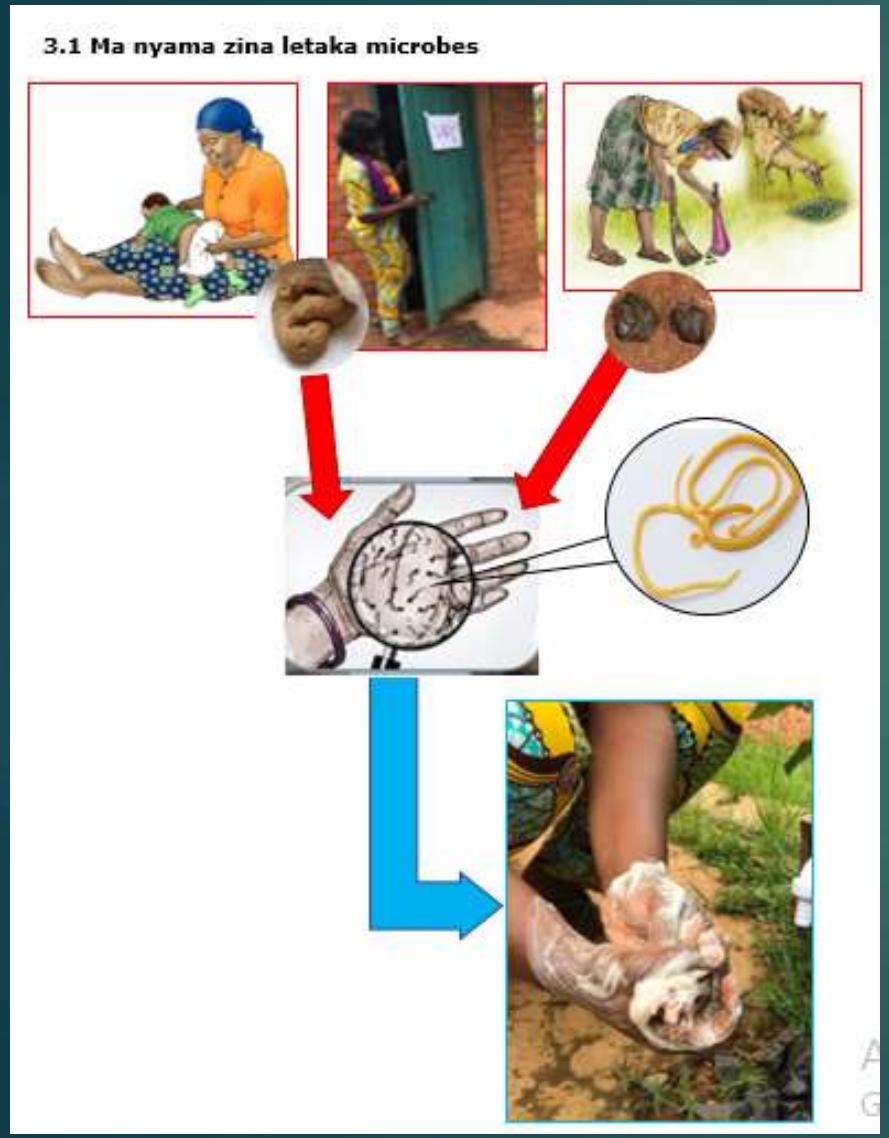
Picha 5.3a – Binini ya klorini iko raisi sana kuliko maji yenye kutokoteshwa

Food storage

6.1 Hatari yakutumiya chakula yenye imeambukizwa na buchafu

6.2b Kuandaa chakula kwa usalama – chamusha na funika

Feces disposals



Thank you!

Questions