

# Hygiene Promotion in Emergencies No 6

## MHM and HP innovation

### Practice



#### Lebanon

In Lebanon, **ACF Spain** supported a process of raising awareness about MHM. They tested reusable sanitary pad kits with 100 female Syrian refugees. The study found that younger women especially didn't have information about menstruation; that bathing increased after the MHM awareness raising sessions; and that women appreciated the re-usable pads with 63% reporting using them at the end of the study conducted in 2013. Thirteen per cent used them in conjunction with disposable pads.

The **NGO Solidarites** undertook a staged process of development of their latrine design when working with Syrian refugees in Lebanon, which involved feedback from users. The final design included a light and single tap inside the latrine, zinc sheeting on the walls to prevent people being seen when the light was on, wire mesh covered ventilation above

the door, locks and spring catches to ensure the doors self close when not being used, and hand-washing units directly outside each block. A few families shared one latrine.

They also ran small group information sessions on MHM. The women and girls were very interested and reported learning a lot, including about things that might appear quite basic, such as being able to wash when they had their period and the importance of regularly changing their pads. The team felt that it would be useful in the future to also include a medical professional in the sessions because the women and girls also had questions that the hygiene promotion teams did not feel qualified to answer.



#### Myanmar

The **WASH Cluster in Myanmar** has prepared a document providing an analysis of the situation of MHM in emergencies in Myanmar. The Cluster had already modified the hygiene kit contents the previous year to include underwear as well as cloth as alternatives to the sanitary pads initially included. The analysis identified some current gaps in provision and the key interventions needed to respond to the gaps, including actions related to access to sanitary protection materials; provision of female-friendly WASH facilities; IEC for MHM and the creation of a supportive environment.

#### Gender

A few years ago, MSF in collaboration with WEDC developed a simple tool to assess gender specific needs related to WASH in emergencies, including MHM. The tool is available at <http://fieldresearch.msf.org/msf/handle/10144/311201>

The tool has now been used in several emergencies including CAR, Ethiopia and South Sudan. The collaboration with WEDC is continuing in 2015 and is currently developing a tool to assess gender and MHM needs in relation to health structures.

# 36%

of girls surveyed in Louga, Senegal said they did not attend school during their periods

See reference



Left: IFRC leaflet on menstrual hygiene management. See the next page for more information on research carried out in Burundi.



# Hygiene Promotion



## Practice

### CASH Transfer Programming (CTP)

The use of cash and vouchers in emergencies is an innovative approach to providing aid and can be used in all sectors including WASH. A key potential application is as a means to ensure that people have access to hygiene related non-food items.

Where appropriate, the use of cash and vouchers can offer greater choice to people and give them more control over spending decisions. In addition it can help to stimulate the recovery of the local economy and can be a more efficient way to provide aid, reducing duplication and cutting costs.

Whilst vouchers can be restricted to a range of hygiene items, the main concern about the use of cash is that it may not be spent on items that will ensure an impact on public health such as soap or water containers. Women may also not prioritise the purchase of menstrual hygiene items. Careful assessment is needed to understand whether cash and vouchers are appropriate tools to use, what people use the cash for and where the gaps are in terms of addressing diverse needs and ensuring public health impact. More research is needed on the impact of hygiene items on public health outcomes and on the use of cash and vouchers for hygiene promotion.

Oxfam is carrying out a short scoping study on Cash Transfer Programming and Market Analysis in PHP humanitarian interventions. The study will review case studies, pilot projects and programme evaluations in emergencies as well as in preparedness and longer term interventions in Oxfam and other agencies in similar sectors. If you have any useful documentation, case studies, and/or the contact details of practitioners in the field of Public Health and Cash, contact Raissa Azzalini: razzalini@oxfam.org.uk



**IFRC Hygiene Kit for Nepal earthquake response Anne Lloyd/British Red Cross**

*This edition of the newsletter was produced in conjunction with Sarah House, Marni Sommer and Sue Cavill, who have been collating learning and updates on organisational activities related to MHM in emergencies.*

# 96%

of surveyed women in Kedougou, Senegal did not regularly go to work during menstruation according to a WSSCC/UN women study

See reference

# 61%

of girls surveyed in Rukungiri District, Uganda reported missing school each month for menstrual related reasons.

See reference

### Hygiene Kits

UNICEF reviewed and revised the global hygiene kits provided by their Supply Division to incorporate components useful for MHM and to make the kits fit for purpose. Two kits have been developed, one called the 'WASH & Dignity Kit' for immediate response, which includes items relevant to MHM including: soap, bucket with lid, reusable menstrual pads, multi-coloured cloth and a torch. The larger 'Family Hygiene & Dignity Kit' also additionally includes a range of underwear, a clothesline, sanitary napkins with wings and also, for protection purposes, a whistle. Contact: Tabinda Syed (tsyed@unicef.org) for more information.



## MHM and HP innovation

### Research

#### IFRC and partners in Burundi

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent and partners including the Burundian Red Cross have carried out operational research into menstrual hygiene management kits in emergencies funded by the Humanitarian Innovation Fund (see: <http://www.humanitarianinnovation.org/projects/large-grants/IFRC-MHM>). This research compared the use of re-usable pads and disposable pads. The research also included the distribution of other items to aid menstrual hygiene management including underwear, small buckets with lids, IEC materials, soap, a carry bag, rope and pegs. Both adolescent girls and older women had a higher satisfaction rating with the reusable kits (90% and 85% respectively) compared to the disposable kits (68% and 65% respectively) and both groups reported hav-

ing a reduction of irritation and itching during their periods (from 41% to 17% and 57% to 17% respectively). Other benefits reported from adolescent girls were that it allowed them to remain in school, which was not always possible previously during their periods. The study was well documented and included recommendations to continue building the capacity and confidence of male and female staff at the National Societies and the IFRC on MHM. This included the importance of comprehensive assessment and consultation with women and adolescent girls on their MHM practices, knowledge and cultural perceptions. For further information see resources page or contact: Vinay Sadavarte, Regional Water and Sanitation Coordinator: [vinay.sadavarte@ifrc.org](mailto:vinay.sadavarte@ifrc.org)



Left: IFRC leaflet on menstrual hygiene management



#### Columbia University and IRC

Dr. Marni Sommer and colleagues at Columbia University and the International Rescue Committee (IRC) are about to initiate a project funded by R2H2 (research for health into humanitarian crises - a collaboration between DFID and the Wellcome Trust) that aims to explore current responses to MHM in humanitarian response, including gaps in existing sector activities. The collaborative effort will include conducting key informant interviews with experts from a range of relevant sectors (e.g. WASH, education, reproduc-

tive health, women's protection), and on-the-ground assessments. A streamlined toolkit for MHM response in emergencies will be drafted and expert input solicited before piloting the toolkit in an emergency. The team welcomes all input from the 'emergency sector' including specific examples and recommendations on how to improve current approaches. Please send all suggestions and comments to Dr. Marni Sommer at: [ms2778@columbia.edu](mailto:ms2778@columbia.edu).

#### Study on NFI needs of women and girls

The Governance and Social Development Resource Centre at DFID has carried out a study on the NFI needs of women and girls in emergencies. A key component of this examined MHM needs. The study involved interviewing experts and practitioners across a range of organisations. To see the report click here: <http://r4d.dfid.gov.uk/Output/196310/>



# Hygiene Promotion



## Advocacy

### Organisational advocacy on MHM

The Environmental Health team at the IRC has been undertaking internal advocacy on MHM. It has run sessions on MHM at their international learning workshop held for Environmental Health, Reproductive Health and Primary Health Care teams and including senior staff. They also undertook an internal review of their work and how well they were responding to MHM needs.

The organisation has moved from a position where there was little interest in MHM to one where there is increasing interest and increased cross-sectoral collaboration through the establishment of a cross-sectoral working group. The directors have also become vocal supporters and one of the directors,

Emmanuel D' Harcourt, Director of the Health Unit, even wrote a blog on the subject - see: <http://www.rescue.org/blog/menstruation-teach-your-humanitarian-workers-it%E2%80%99s-not-dirty-word>.

IRC has also linked up with other actors working on MHM. At field level there has been varying levels of engagement across programmes. Efforts have been made to showcase work internally (through newsletters) and externally (through their website) to continue to raise awareness and also to give concrete ideas on MHM innovations to field programmes who are yet to get on board.



Above: Members of the Health Unit washing soiled sanitary cloths in a session on MHM (photo: IRC/L.Walker)



### Interagency Meeting on MHM

A regional meeting was held in East Africa in 2014 for practitioners from a range of organisations to discuss ideas on how they could collectively contribute to improving MHM in humanitarian and development settings. The meeting ensured that information on programme activities and research in the region was shared, helped to advocate for the importance of MHM and showcased some of the key materials available. The meeting was organised by UN-HCR and IFRC.

### Menstrual Hygiene Day

Menstrual hygiene day is on May 26th each year but you don't have to wait for next years' event to start advocating for MHM. Click here to find out about the activities that took place around the world this year and for a variety of resources that you can use.

Running training sessions can kick-start the process of getting staff involved in MHM.

Both Medair and Catholic Relief Services have run sessions on MHM at their international learning workshops for WASH staff in 2014 and 2015.



Girls from Kamuna Primary School examine reusable pads produced by a public-private partnership between SPLASH and YASH Pharmaceutical. The pads were developed to last for five years, or more than 65 washes. (Photo: SPLASH)

# Hygiene Promotion in Emergencies No 6

## Other innovations in hygiene promotion

### PML

The Portable Microbiology Laboratory (PML) was designed by Bob Metcalf to enable water testing in remote locations where electricity is not available to incubate test samples. This innovative approach involves keeping the sample next to the body and using the heat of the body to incubate the sample over a 24 hour period.

The PML kit includes two types of water tests: the IDEXX Colilert Presence/Absence test and the 3M Petrifilm E.coli/Coliform count plate test. The Colilert test is a 10 ml covered tube that contains a dried nutrient powder to which is added a 10 ml water sample. The water sample turns yellow in the presence of E. coli. The petrifilm is used to count the number of individual E.coli in a 1ml sample. Twenty five water tests are included in each kit along with sterile plastic pipettes, collecting bags and a portable UV light, all of which are carried in small plastic zip lock bag.

Dr. Metcalf uses a three-step approach that involves working closely with a community and training them so that they learn to carry out and read the simple tests themselves – making the process much more accessible and ‘demystifying microbiology’.

Communities are then taught how to either pasteurize the water using a solar cooker or how to disinfect it using specified amounts of commercially available bleach. For more information and pictures click on the link: <http://www.imageevent.com/bobmetcalf>

Some WASH practitioners are sceptical about the use of the water testing kit as a sustainable approach to water testing but some NGO’s such as ‘A Single Drop for Safe Water’ (ASDSW - an NGO in the Philippines) have been using the testing process to involve communities and to motivate them to take action to treat or protect their water supplies and this tool could be of particular value to hygiene promoters and social mobilisers.

Using the PML to test local water supplies following Typhoon Haiyan



### Working with children

In November 2013 Oxfam in Indonesia received funding from the Oxfam WASH innovation fund to carry out a pilot project with its partner Totalitas focusing on hygiene promotion for children. The design of the project involved identifying both ‘intervention schools’ and ‘control schools’ so that a comparison could be made during the evaluation.

The project provided more evidence of the benefits of working with children. Children in the intervention schools practiced handwashing more often and showed increased confidence and self esteem compared to those in the control schools. There were also reported increases in handwashing in the communities living around the schools and many reports of how the children had influenced their parents and families.

The project also developed new tools for working with children and aimed to encourage children to lead many of the activities themselves. Various familiar participatory tools were used by the project such as two pile sorting and f diagram cards. The evaluation made use of the ‘glowgerm’ handwashing UV light and asked children to take photographs themselves of good and bad practices.

A variety of new tools were also developed, including monitoring and assessment forms for use by children. These were compiled into a book that the children could use informally at home and show to siblings and parents. Nine online games for children, focusing on WASH issues were also developed and piloted in the project area with very positive feedback from the children.

Children taking part in the evaluation of the Oxfam project



# Hygiene Promotion



## Training

**RedR India** is planning a 4 day hygiene promotion training in India from 8th to 11th December: Click here for more information and other available courses: <http://www.redr.org.in/training-services-training-calendar-and-fees>

**RedR UK** is planning training course on working with children and child protection: click here from more information: <http://www.redr.org.uk/en/Training-and-more/find-a-training-course.cfm>

**Bioforce** run regular WASH trainings in French that include an HP module. The next training is in Bamako in October 2015: click here for more information: <http://humanitaire.institutbioforce.fr/fr/competences/coordonner-la-promotion-de-lhygi%C3%A8ne-et-favoriser-la-participation-communautaire-bamako>

**IDPMS** runs basic courses in public health and WASH - click here for more information: [http://idpms.co/wash\\_emergencies.php](http://idpms.co/wash_emergencies.php)

## Online training and conferences

The 3rd Annual Virtual MHM Conference will be held on October 29, 2014. Contact [mhm.webnyc@gmail.com](mailto:mhm.webnyc@gmail.com) or [ysheido@unicef.org](mailto:ysheido@unicef.org) for further information.

DisasterReady.org is a free, easy to use online training resource designed to help prepare aid workers for the demands they face in the field. Courses on health and WASH are also available. Click here for further details: <http://www.disasterready.org/programs-and-operations>

For online training on cash transfers in emergencies click here: <http://www.cashlearning.org/news-and-events/news-and-events/post/24-e-learning-module-on-cash-transfers-in-emergencies>

The Hygiene Promotion in Emergencies newsletter is produced on a voluntary basis by Suzanne Ferron and Mimi Khan, who both work as independent consultants. It is intended as a means to share news of innovations and experiences in the sector and to support a global community of practice. Readers are welcome to submit short overviews of their work and to contribute to shaping the content of the newsletter. We also welcome any feedback on the content or suggestions to improve the format.



Please send any contributions for the next newsletter including photos, suggestions and field examples on HP in Emergencies to:

[Mkan61101@aol.com](mailto:Mkan61101@aol.com) or [suzanne.ferron@gmail.com](mailto:suzanne.ferron@gmail.com)

Back copies of the newsletter are also available



Breaking the taboo of menstrual hygiene on Menstrual Hygiene Day where women gathered at a religious Islamic Madras, supported by IRC Pakistan (photo: IRC)



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## Useful Resources

### MHM

The Menstrual hygiene day website has several useful resources including a toolkit to promote MHM. See <http://menstrualhygieneday.org/2015-pop-up-exhibit-toolkit/> (click here for further details). Also a short film prepared for MHM Day: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XCiZFu\\_8WtQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XCiZFu_8WtQ)

SPLASH encourages a community approach to MHM. A USAID funded school WASH programme in Zambia has developed some useful practical materials for use with girls on MHM. See [http://www.washplus.org/sites/default/files/mhm\\_toolkit2015.pdf](http://www.washplus.org/sites/default/files/mhm_toolkit2015.pdf) (click here to find out more.)



A SPLASH newsletter is available at: [http://www.washplus.org/sites/default/files/splash-mhm\\_success.pdf](http://www.washplus.org/sites/default/files/splash-mhm_success.pdf); Further information on SPLASH activities: <http://www.washplus.org/countries/zambia>

For more information on the IFRC operational research see: [watsanmissionassistant.wikispaces.com/Menstrual+Hygiene+Management](http://watsanmissionassistant.wikispaces.com/Menstrual+Hygiene+Management)

A paper looking at MHM from the perspective of rights and gender equity by Ina Winkler and Virginia Roaf called "Taking the Bloody Linen Out of the Close-Menstrual Hygiene as a Priority for Achieving Gender Equality (2015)" has recently been written. Click here to see the paper.

MHM in emergencies overview diagram: **Click here to view**

### Working with children

A research brief on children's sanitation is available (click here) and information sheets on children's faeces disposal in different countries are available at: <http://www.wsp.org/content/ensuring-safe-sanitation-children-0>

### PML

For more information: United Nations Human Settlements Programme (2010) A Practical Method for Rapid Assessment of the Bacterial Quality of Water: A field based guide: UN Habitat, Nairobi. This book contains a list of suppliers of the kit. Click here to see the document.