

Domain: Environmental sanitation
Subject: Diarrhoeal disease transmission

Age group: 11–14 years

2.4 The six F's

Learning goals:

Knowledge:

- Children can describe transmission routes for diarrhoeal disease.
- They can mention ways by which transmission of diarrhoeas can be prevented.
- They can state the signs and symptoms of a person suffering from diarrhoea.
- They know about dehydration effects and how to prevent/treat them.
(The six F's are faeces, fingers, food, fluids (water), flies, and fields).

Attitude:

- They appreciate the importance of handwashing and cooking food thoroughly.
- They are ready to practise good sanitation and hygiene and to stimulate others to do the same.

Practical skills:

- They develop drawing skills for diagrams.
- They can wash hands correctly to prevent transmission of diarrhoeal diseases.
- They can make an oral rehydration solution.

Psychosocial life skills:

- They can make correct decisions on handwashing at critical times.
- They communicate effectively to others about preventing diarrhoeal diseases and preventing and curing dehydration.

Participatory methods:

- Drawing - F Diagram
- Demonstration on oral rehydration

Materials:

Paper or cards for drawing and writing words, pencils/markers, manila paper (optional), wool or string or local materials such as stalks of grass or thin twigs that can be shaped into arrows, a transparent plastic bag filled with water (preferably yellow or light brown in colour), a pin or other sharp object, a small basin, a glass with clean water, some sugar and salt, a teaspoon

Activities:

F Diagram for diarrhoeal diseases

The activity is a variation on the F diagram on worms. It can be done in plenary or by small groups of children. In the latter case, the teacher compares the results in plenary and helps to add any missing risks/connections. The diagrams can differ from each other; what is important is that each diagram depicts all six F's with accurate connections.

- First ask a child to draw a picture of a child with diarrhoea and to place this on the left-hand side of the blackboard or on the ground on the left-hand side in a circle of standing or sitting children.
- Ask another child to draw a picture of a healthy child and place this on the right-hand side.
- Ask the children how the diarrhoea may pass from the ill child to the healthy child.
- Ask some children to draw a picture of each travel route or write the word concerned on a card, slip of paper or slate and place them between the pictures of the children.
- Ask the other children to add in transmission lines, using, for example, twigs or twine, until the diagram is complete.
- Check the work to see that all risky practices and connections are included.
- Now ask the children to describe transmission routes and how transmission can be prevented.

Demonstrating oral de/rehydration

- Facilitate a discussion about diarrhoea:
 - Who has had diarrhoea?
 - What happened?
 - Whose young brother or sister has had diarrhoea?
 - Is diarrhoea a common disease in the community?
- Show the children a transparent bag filled with yellowish or brown water.
- Explain that the bag represents a baby or a young child who has diarrhoea.
- Tell the class that the baby/infant is about to poop and ask them to watch carefully what happens.
- Invite one of the children to come and pierce the bag with a sharp object.
- Ask the class to describe what happens. (The bag empties and becomes wrinkled and limp.)
- Facilitate a discussion about what will happen to the baby/infant. (Together with the excreta, the child loses all the fluids in its body and starts to dry out and become limp.)
- Ask what the mother, father, brother or sister can do when this happens (replenish the fluids).
- Now demonstrate what kind of fluid to give to someone with diarrhoea who loses a lot of water along with the stools. Fill a glass with clean water, put one heaped spoonful of sugar and a pinch of salt in it and vigorously stir the mixture. Ask what this mixture will do.
- Facilitate a discussion on why the water should be as pure as possible (but water that is not fully sterile is better than no water at all).
- Invite one or more children to come and taste the oral rehydration treatment (ORT) mixture and describe its taste. (They should taste both sugar and salt; the salty taste can be described as 'as salty as tears'.) Explain why sugar and salt are added.
- Help the class draw conclusions on ORT (why, when, what, how) and what they can do if someone has diarrhoea at home.

Application:

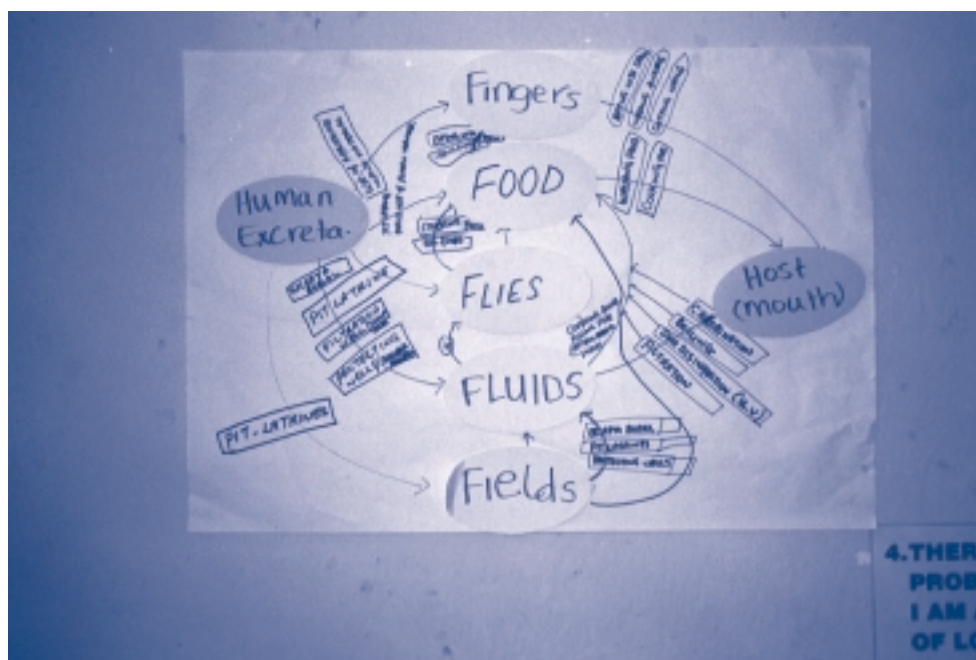
- The children find out whether their parents know about ORT, explaining what they have learned in school. They report their findings and experiences in class. The teacher monitors whether knowledge on ORT increases over time.
- The teacher organises an environmental walk to find the six F's in school, linking the walk to actions that can bring about improvements.
- Arrange a simple home survey, during which each student finds out which of the six F's are safe or unsafe in their homes. During the next lesson, the teacher assists them to document their findings in a table. They use the table to analyse, identify and communicate about improvements, and to practise arithmetic.
- Demonstrations of dehydration and rehydration, the F diagram and the outcomes of mini-surveys can be given at parents' days, followed by discussions about possible actions for improvement.

Learning indicators:

- The children can explain what the F diagram shows and what each F stands for.
- They can demonstrate and explain faecal dehydration and ORT.
- Handwashing and toilet facilities are available and seen to be in use and toilets and the school surroundings are free from faecal contamination.
- Teachers and children monitor handwashing at critical times through the 'whispering game' and observations. (See also sheet 1.2, I am a 'well-washer')

Competence:

Knowledge and practices to reduce infections and death from diarrhoeal diseases



Six F diagram from Training of Trainers, Zambia (Photo: Christine Sijbesma, IRC)