IMPROVING PROJECT RESULTS THROUGH INTEGRATION

Why Include Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Interventions in Your Maternal and Child Health Project Designs?

THE CHALLENGE

Every 21 Seconds
a child dies from diarrhea. This amounts to approximately 4,100 deaths a day.²

Nearly 1 in 5
children die – about 1.5 million each year – due to diarrhea. Diarrhea remains the second leading cause of death among children under five globally. It kills more young children than AIDS, malaria and measles combined.³

Over 50%
even of malnutrition cases, globally, are caused by waterborne diseases such as diarrhea or intestinal worm infections.⁶

About 44 million
pregnant women have sanitation-related hookworm infections that pose a considerable health burden in developing societies.⁷

2.2 Million
people in developing countries die annually from preventable diseases associated with lack of access to safe drinking water, inadequate sanitation and poor hygiene,⁴ and 90 per cent of these deaths are children under the age of five.⁵

THE SOLUTION

Thoughtful integration of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) into all aspects of maternal and child health interventions and program design is essential to addressing the issues that impact maternal and child survival. By integrating WASH you may see:

Maternal Health
Improvements in maternal health reducing vitamin deficiencies, trachoma, hepatitis and anemia among other things.

Neonatal Health
Reduced neonatal fatalities and safer delivery by reducing infection or sepsis.

Child Health
Reduced numbers of preventable waterborne illnesses that impact child survival, such as diarrhea. WASH breaks the cycle of childhood illness that contribute to the debilitating effects of malnutrition.

19% reduction
of maternal mortality rates shown when birth attendants wash their hands before delivery.

44% reduction
reduction in risk of death if mothers washed their hands prior to handling their newborns.

On average 65% reduction
in child mortality caused by diarrheal diseases when WASH is integrated with child survival interventions.
WASH and Maternal and Child Health

Slow progress on water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), particularly sanitation, in developing countries is holding back progress on all other MDGs, according to researchers at the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Review Summit. Achieving the water and sanitation MDGs contributes an average 30 percent toward other MDGs such as girls’ education, maternal and child health, and gender empowerment. Addressing the causes of under 5 child mortality through maternal and child health interventions can be hindered if progress is not also made in the areas of access to safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene. Hygiene promotion is the most cost effective health intervention according to the World Bank.1

♦ Access to WASH during pregnancy improves maternal health by reducing incidence of waterborne illnesses.
♦ After birth, a child with access to WASH is less likely to suffer from preventable waterborne illnesses such as diarrhea and worm infections.
♦ Mothers with increased access to water are more likely to properly clean and dispose of children’s excreta, reducing incidence of illness.
♦ Access to water also means a decrease in the time demands of collecting water, allowing mothers more free time that can be spent on childcare and ensuring proper nutrition.
♦ Free from the burden of malnutrition caused by chronic diarrhea, children are able to get the nutrition they need to reach their 5th birthday.
♦ Improved quantities and quality of domestic water and sanitation reduce main morbidity and mortality factors for young children, improved nutrition and food security reduces susceptibility to diseases.
♦ Improved health and reduced labor burdens from water portage reduce mortality risks, improved health and nutrition reduce susceptibility to anemia and other conditions that affect maternal mortality.
♦ Unhygienic home environments can expose children to infectious diseases. Children’s excreta are more likely to contain diarrheal pathogens and proper hygienic disposal is critical to reducing the incidence of exposure.

Globally, 1 out of every 9 people (over 780 million) still do not have access to improved sources of drinking water, and 2 out of every 5 people (2.5 billion) lack improved sanitation. By integrating program interventions, projects can see increased success.

FIND OUT HOW WASH INTERVENTIONS CAN IMPROVE YOUR PROJECT: