

*Saving lives
with clean safe
care at birth*



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Soap Matters Issue 20

Welcome to a special TEACH CLEAN themed edition of Soap Matters

Why is it that some key basic areas of health service provision are neglected? Does this partly reflect the status accorded to the area and the workers within it? Why do these basic areas and fundamental needs tend to be forgotten in the rush for new developments & technological innovations?

These are questions which challenge many individuals and organisations working in global health, and certainly Soapbox. Indeed the main *raison d'être* for establishing this small NGO was the neglect of the fundamental right to clean care at birth in healthcare institutions and of the very basics of infection prevention, such as a good quality and reliable supply of water. Through our work over the last 7 years we have provided evidence of the breadth and depth of this neglect and of the causes and consequences, working with partners in diverse settings from Bangladesh to Tanzania, from Ethiopia to Malawi, and from India to Myanmar. One of the most striking findings is the low status accorded to a key area of service provision in maternity wards - environmental cleaning and cleaners. This discovery has been a strong driving force for the recent work of Soapbox focusing on raising awareness of the challenges and benefits of cleaning in maternity units, and enabling the huge gap in training of cleaners to be addressed.



Over recent months we have been able to celebrate three major milestones in achieving our aims: the publication of our paper on the neglected role of healthcare cleaning staff, the dissemination of TEACH CLEAN - Soapbox's participatory training package for healthcare cleaning staff, and the inclusion of indicators on facility cleaning in the major WASH and IPC global monitoring platform (WHO and UNICEF JMP).

This newsletter highlights all three of these milestones and our ongoing activities to implement, strengthen, evaluate and share the TEACH CLEAN package.

The Neglected Role of Health Facility Cleaning Staff

In collaboration with our country partners, Soapbox has conducted assessments of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and infection prevention control (IPC), including environmental hygiene, in maternity units in a number of diverse low- and middle-income countries.

Our recent publication '*An invisible workforce: the neglected role of cleaners in patient safety on maternity units*' highlighted the findings from needs assessments in India, Bangladesh, Zanzibar and The Gambia.

These assessments took a mixed methods approach to capture evidence of the status and drivers of WASH and IPC on maternity units. A total of fifty-six health facilities across the four countries were surveyed, and common themes emerged. On average, less than a third of the facilities surveyed delivered formal training to their cleaning staff.

'Health workers who clean are environmental health champions'

The paper highlights how low status within facilities, wider societal marginalisation, lack of training, and poor pay and working conditions contribute to the lack of prioritisation placed on environmental hygiene in health facilities. Yet within these facilities, staff who clean are the interface between WASH and IPC. It is imperative that this neglect is addressed to enable sustainable reductions in healthcare associated infections (HAIs) in maternity units.

You can read the full article published on 15th January 2019 on the Global Health Action website www.tandfonline.com.

Participatory Teaching for a Cleaner Environment and Health for All

Soapbox were delighted to launch the updated TEACH CLEAN package in November 2018. The package presents information and materials required to deliver comprehensive, participatory training in environmental hygiene and IPC in healthcare facilities. Tailored towards use within low-resource settings, TEACH CLEAN is a freely available, evidence and best practice based resource which is adaptable to the local context, accessible for staff with limited literacy skills through its participatory methodology and is suitable for a cascade approach to training (Training of Trainers, ToT).

The updated package includes:

Written and Illustrated Cleaning Procedure Guidelines

In the absence of existing local cleaning guidelines, or in cases where the guidelines available do not reflect best practice, TEACH CLEAN provides written and illustrated guidelines which outline how to effectively perform common cleaning tasks. In addition, illustrated guidelines provide an accessible reference manual for staff with limited levels of literacy skills.

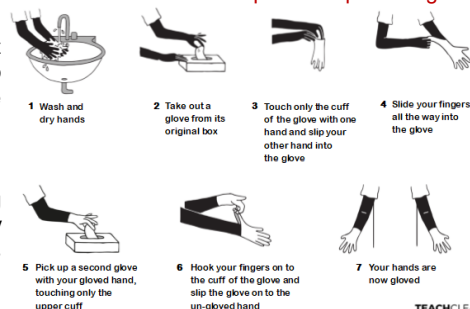
Supplementary ToT Training Modules on Supportive Supervision and Quality Improvement

Central to creating an enabling environment is the recognition of the importance of IPC and the valuing of the role of cleaners in establishing and maintaining IPC standards. Essential theory and methodology of supportive supervision and quality improvement are presented in training modules for trainers designed to support sustainable improvements in environmental hygiene in low-resource settings.

Competency Assessment Checklists

TEACH CLEAN supports the implementation of competency-based assessments, as part of supportive supervision, by providing guidance on conducting assessments, a set of checklist templates and a competency assessment referral procedure.

Illustrated Guide: How to put on disposable gloves



Measuring WASH in Maternity Units

At the end of 2018, the WHO-UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene published core questions and indicators for monitoring WASH in healthcare facilities in the Sustainable Development Goals.

These questions are intended to be relevant in all countries and settings, and focused on the minimum criteria for provision of basic WASH services in healthcare facilities (HCFs).

To maximise the improvement of health outcomes from WASH services, it is essential to address underlying quality of care issues including ineffective IPC practices, especially around the time of birth. Soapbox were delighted to contribute

to the development of these indicators and, in particular, focused on IPC measures such as environmental cleaning.

The new JMP indicators define HCFs which deliver on basic environmental cleaning practices as those which have protocols for cleaning, and where all staff with cleaning responsibilities have received training on cleaning procedures.

This latest JMP document recognises that additional questions may be required to assess WASH services in specialised service areas or wards. Soapbox are excited to continue working with partners to develop a set of indicators and questions specific to the requirements of WASH in delivery rooms, which will complement this set of facility-level indicators and questions.

The Role of Cleaners: Neglected Frontline WASH Workers in Healthcare Facilities

TEACH CLEAN and the neglected role of cleaners will take centre stage this month during a webinar organised by the WASH in Healthcare Facilities Initiative. Soapbox's Professor Wendy Graham, Emma Morrison and Claire Kilpatrick will discuss the origins and rationale for TEACH CLEAN, share first hand accounts of implementation in The Gambia and highlight opportunities to integrate training into wider global initiatives.



TEACH CLEAN in Action in Tanzania – Training Cleaning Champions



TEACH CLEAN is currently being implemented in 3 busy maternity units in Dar es Salaam, as part of the JGHT-funded CLEAN Study. The study, which is the first formal evaluation of whether training 'cleaning champions', to educate hospital cleaners in best practice methods, improves environmental hygiene in maternity and newborn units, is being delivered by a multi-disciplinary partnership composed of researchers from London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, NHS Lanarkshire, Ifakara Health Institute and Soapbox.

Prior to the training of 'champions', a team of experienced trainers at Muhimbili University of Health & Allied Sciences (MUHAS) assessed the needs of each hospital and adapted the TEACH CLEAN package to ensure consistency with national cleaning guidelines and the local context, with advice from a regional IPC Advisory Committee. During a 4-day Training the Trainers workshop, eighteen 'cleaning champions' were trained in IPC and environmental hygiene theory, best cleaning practice, participatory training

methodology and supportive supervision. The 'cleaning champions' have now delivered participatory training workshops in their respective facilities and to date 58 cleaners, medical attendants and nurses who are responsible for routine cleaning activities have been trained across the three facilities. As the 'champions' train these members of staff, best cleaning practices spread throughout the hospitals. MUHAS is so impressed with the TEACH CLEAN package that they are keen to rollout training at other hospitals in the country and it is hoped that lessons learnt from this study will help inform a larger trial which will assess the intervention's effectiveness in relation to environmental hygiene and the prevalence of HAIs in mothers and newborns.

Global Dissemination of the TEACH CLEAN Package



Soapbox has received requests from a diverse range of stakeholders including Ministries of Health, IPC societies, training institutions and NGOs and locations for intended rollout are shown above.

How to Request the TEACH CLEAN Package

TEACH CLEAN is a free resource which presents information and materials required to deliver participatory training in environmental hygiene and IPC in healthcare facilities. To request a copy, complete the online form on our website or email teachclean@soapboxcollaborative.org.

The TEACH CLEAN Advocacy & Communications Resource Pack

Soapbox has developed an Advocacy and Communications Resource Pack to compliment the TEACH CLEAN package. This resource pack contains helpful FAQs, presentation slides and videos that provide useful background information on the package, along with social media ready advocacy messages. This is a great tool to help promote the package and also support you in your activities to advocate for cleaner, safer healthcare facilities. The pack is available through an online form at www.soapboxcollaborative.org.



TEACH CLEAN helps address a lack of formal training for those who clean and promotes IPC and WASH standards for a safer environment.

It underpins quality health for all.