

In Elgeyo Marakwet County, access to clean water and appropriate sanitation remains a challenge to a significant proportion of the population.

Access to improved sanitation services are limited and many households still use unimproved sources and practice open defecation. A recent study sought to establish the effects of poor sanitation on public health, the environment and well-being in Elgeyo Marakwet County. **What do the findings show?**

Key contributors to diarrhoea in children in Elgeyo Marakwet County

- Contaminated sources of household water
- Lack of treatment of water at home and poor storage
- Poor personal hygiene and sanitation habits of the caregivers



Using water from unimproved sources is associated with diarrhoea in children.

58% of households in which a child had diarrhoea (cases), used water from unimproved sources, compared to **53%** of households in which a child did not have diarrhoea.

72.5% of children who were suffering diarrhoea (cases) had recurrent cases in the previous two weeks, compared to only **10%** of those who did not have diarrhoea at the time of the survey.



Not treating drinking water at home and poor storage contributes to the risk of a child having diarrhoea.

71% of households in which a child had diarrhoea, did not treat water before drinking, compared to **56%** of those in which the child did not have diarrhoea.



Caregivers' exposure to sanitation messages appears to contribute to reduced risk of diarrhoea in a child.

58% of the caregivers who had children without diarrhoea had been exposed to messages on sanitation and hygiene compared to **54%** in the group with children who had diarrhoea.

Health facilities played a key role in communicating sanitation related messages.

42% of the caregivers with children without diarrhoea and **30%** of those who had diarrhoea, heard the information at the health facilities.



Poor management of faecal sludge contributes to contamination of the environment and water sources.

30% The proportion of faecal matter in Elgeyo Marakwet that is not safely contained or disposed of safely.

19% The proportion of faecal matter in Elgeyo Marakwet deposited directly into the environment through open defecation.



If caregivers wash hands with soap after using toilet, it reduces a child's risk of diarrhoea.

62% of respondents in households where a child did not have diarrhoea reported washing hands with soap after using the toilet, compared to **54%** of those who had a child with diarrhoea.

30% of households that did not have a child with diarrhoea that had soap present at the handwashing facility, compared to only **19%** of those that had a child with diarrhoea.

Recommendations:

To address this situation, Elgeyo Marakwet County Government should:

- Develop and implement policy on proper waste management and water treatment
- Mobilise the community to build improved toilets
- Allocate additional resources to countryside sanitation programmes
- Conduct public awareness and education on personal hygiene and sanitation.

For more information on these findings, see report:

Understanding the Effects of Poor Sanitation on Public Health, the Environment and Well-being – Elgeyo Marakwet County. 2018. Report of Research Findings published by the Voice for Change Partnership (V4CP) programme.

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