

Transmission Route Instructions

What is it?

This tool educates people about fecal-oral transmission routes using the F-Diagram and how controls can be used to block the disease transmission routes. The name “F-Diagram” only works in English and stands for feces, food, flies, fields, fingers, fluids, and face. Call this game Transmission Routes or something similar in another language.

Why use it?

This tool can help participants discover and analyze how diarrhoeal disease can be spread through the environment.

How to use it

1. Cut the F-Diagram into individual components, including the arrows, before starting the activity.
2. Introduce the topic and start with the pictures of feces and the child’s mouth. Explain that there are many ways in which pathogens can be “transmitted” from the feces to the mouth. Place the feces picture at one end of the table/floor and the mouth picture at the other end.
3. Divide participants into groups of 5-8 people. Ask the groups to place the remaining pre-cut cards, including the arrows, between these two pictures to show how pathogens can find their way to the mouth.
4. When the groups have made their diagrams, ask each group to show and explain its diagram to the other groups. Let them respond to questions raised by the other groups.
5. Discuss the similarities and differences between the various diagrams. Encourage discussion to find out why participants placed the pictures in the particular order and ensure everyone understands what a “transmission route” is.
6. Facilitate a discussion to help the group use this new knowledge to examine its own situation. Discuss and identify:
 - The transmission routes in the community
 - The problem areas and behaviours that are putting people at risk of infection.
7. Then ask each group to identify practices that can break the transmission routes. Have them place the following pre-cut cards on top of the arrows: latrine, water treatment technologies, hand washing, good hygiene practices, good food handling practices and safe water storage. It is useful to have blank paper and pens so that the group can create its own blocks if the pre-cut cards do not cover all situations.
8. When the groups have made their diagrams, ask each group to show and explain its diagram to the other groups. Let them respond to questions raised by the other groups.
9. Discuss the similarities and differences between the various diagrams. Encourage discussion to find out why participants placed the blocking cards where they did and ensure everyone understands how that barrier works.
10. Encourage discussion to ensure understanding.

Facilitator Notes

- Some participants may at first be shocked at the content of this activity. There may be some disbelief that feces can be transmitted to the mouth. The best way to deal with this situation is to get the group working together as quickly as possible. Those

participants who are more receptive than others will help the disbelievers to become more involved.

- Do not be concerned if the groups do not identify all the fecal-oral routes. It is enough if they have identified some of the routes.
- Do not prompt or direct the groups when they are trying to create their diagrams.
- If the whole group does not manage to clearly identify the transmission routes, try to find out why. It may be useful to hold a group discussion to evaluate the activity, which then can be tried a second time.
- It would be a good idea to put the diagrams on the wall so it is easy for everyone to see and refer to later on.
- This activity can be adapted to investigate other diseases such as intestinal worms, schistosomiasis, guinea worm disease, and dengue fever.

(Adapted from WHO, 1998)