



Figure 1. People with disabilities and older people are vulnerable to being infected with the Covid-19 virus.

HYGIENE BEHAVIORS TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 AMONG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND OLDER PEOPLE

KEY MESSAGES

- People with disabilities and older people are vulnerable to getting infected by the Covid-19 virus. Their disabilities have led them to depend on others to practice hygiene behaviors to prevent the spread of Covid-19.
- Providing inclusive access to information and accessible water and sanitation facilities have increased public awareness about the importance of hygiene behavior during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The study recommends that the government and organizations implementing the Covid-19 pandemic handling program involve people with disabilities and the elderly as part of a sustainable and equitable development program strategy.

ORANG DENGAN DISABILITAS DAN LANSIA DAN PANDEMI COVID-19

Over 1 million people or about 15% of the world's population are people living with some form of disability. The number is dramatically increasing. This is due to demographic trends and chronic diseases spreading rapidly (WHO, 2011). Although the number is large and increasing, people from this group often face diverse social, economic, and cultural exclusion, they are also restricted from complete, effective, and equal participation in society (UNFPA, 2012; WHO, 2011).

During the pandemic, people with disabilities and older people are vulnerable to being infected with the Covid-19 virus. Their limitations make them have to depend on others, especially to access health services, personal protective equipment, or other basic needs. Those with certain disabilities may require to touch various surfaces or assistive devices which may be

contaminated thus requiring more frequent hand washing (White et al., 2016). People with intellectual and cognitive impairments may not remember or recognize the significance of hand washing. Stigma, discrimination, and social exclusion also have put people with disabilities at a disadvantage situation, and women with disabilities are at risk of experiencing domestic violence. (White, et al., 2020).

The presence of caregivers is actually very important in providing this support. However, information and social support regarding the provision of water and sanitation facilities as well as hygiene behavior for the disabled and the elderly during the pandemic are still very limited (Wilbur et al., 2019).

The Center for Islamic Studies at the Universitas Nasional (PPI-UNAS) in collaboration with the

Hygiene & Behavior Change Coalition (HBCC)

The UK Government and Unilever launched the Hygiene & Behavior Change Coalition (HBCC) Program in March 2020 as an effort to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in 37 developing countries. The HBCC program aims to reach more than 1 billion people—including people with disabilities and the elderly, through raising awareness about the importance of hygienic behavior, especially the habit of washing hands with soap regularly through the use of mass media, interpersonal communication, training and, distribution of hygiene products (Unilever, 2020).

Recent evidence shows that Covid-19 has had uneven impacts on the lives of persons with disabilities and older people, and they are more vulnerable. However, there is a lack of evidence to understand the experience of people with disabilities and the elderly, the interventions to reduce exclusion and the evaluation of its impact.

To track the impact of the pandemic among persons with disabilities and older people with good quality PENDA (Program for Evidence to Inform Disability Action) and UKAid in collaboration with the International Center for Diarrheal Disease Research, Bangladesh (Bangladesh), National University (Indonesia), B-Scan (Bangladesh), World Vision (United States), Universi-

International Center for Diarrheal Disease Research, Bangladesh (icddr,b) and supported by PENDA (Program for Evidence to Inform Disability Action) and UKAid conducted an evaluation study of the Hygiene Behavior Change Coalition Program (HBCC) in Indonesia. This study aims to look at the inclusiveness and effectiveness of the implementation of the HBCC Program as well as to understand the situation experienced by the disabled and the elderly during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The evaluation study of the HBCC program was carried out in March-July 2022. The study was conducted through a survey of 340 respondents consisting of groups of people with disabilities and the elderly and their comparisons (without disability and young adult) adjusted for age and gender, in-depth interviews with key figures, and photovoice ranking for students and older people with disabilities.

To identify the variety of disabilities, this study used the Washington Group questionnaire and obtained data on the following forms of disability: mobility (7%), vision (4%), cognition (4%), hearing (3%),



Figure 2. Children washing hands in public facility.

ty of Western Australia (Australia), the African Population and Health Research Center (Kenya), and the Center for Infectious Disease Research (Zambia) to conduct an evaluation study of the HBCC program in Indonesia, Kenya and Zambia.

In Indonesia, HBCC is implemented by a number of implementing organizations such as Save the Children Indonesia, Action Aid, UNICEF, SNV, GIZ. The Universitas Nasional conducted an HBCC study for a program implemented by Save the Children Indonesia which works in two areas; North Jakarta and West Bandung Regency.

communication (3%), anxiety (2%), self-care (2%) and depression (1%).

This survey found that as many as 37% of respondents from the disability and elderly group had experienced symptoms of Covid-19, this number was lower than the group of people without disabilities which reached 41%. The vaccination rate among the disabled and elderly has only reached 69%, lower than the non-disabled and non-elderly groups which have reached 94%.

KEY FINDINGS

1. Television, the most accessible media to get information about Covid-19 and the prevention ways.

Television is the main media chosen by respondents to get information about Covid-19. For people with disabilities and the elderly, television is the easiest information technology to use, available at home or in the neighborhood, and can be enjoyed together. Messages conveyed through television are more trusted because they are conveyed by the government representatives or figures who have expertise and broadcasted by official institutions.

Unfortunately, the advantages of television have not been widely used to convey messages of more inclusive hygienic behavior, for example by presenting characters with disabilities or companions for people with disabilities and the elderly.

2. Caregivers, the role model in practicing hygiene behavior.

Caregivers such as family, neighbors, and local health workers are role models for the disabled and the elderly related to health issues and daily hygiene behavior. More than 40% of respondents from groups of people with disabilities take their family members as role models, while other figures such as celebrities and religious figures are only chosen by 4%.

Caregivers also act as a source of information and a place to ask questions about Covid-19 and other health problems. As many as 65% of respondents with disabilities choose family as a source of information, followed by local government (32%), and health cadres (33%). Celebrities and religious figures were only selected by 2%.

The closeness of the relationship makes the caregivers – both individually and in institutions - make them understand the special needs of groups with disabilities. From the caregivers, some initiatives emerged as such providing transparent masks easy-to-reach hand washing facilities, or the use of sign language interpreters in communication activities, and the use of braille for communication media.

Leaders from organizations of people with disabilities and special schools also play a role in voicing the needs of people with disabilities in public spaces.

3. Knowledge about Covid-19 and ways to prevent it is quite high.

Overall, more than 80% of respondents stated that they had received messages related to Covid-19 and hygiene behavior to prevent the spread of the virus.

Data from the disability group shows that the spread of the Covid-19 virus occurs through the patient's cough (82%), sneezing (71%) and not wearing a mask (51%). While the spread due to crowds reached 19%, living with Covid-19 patients by 8%, by shaking hands by 4% and touching surfaces contaminated with the virus by 3%.

While among the elderly, the spread of the virus through the patient's cough is 85%, sneezing (78%), and not using a mask by 61%. The spread by gathering reached 24% and by handshake only 4%.

According to the disability group, the Covid-19 virus can be prevented through hygienic behavior such as washing hands (80%), using masks (79%), and keeping a distance (70%). While the way of prevention by vaccination reaches 38% and avoids crowds by 27%.

Knowledge of the disabled group on how to prevent the spread of the virus is also quite high, such as washing hands with soap (86%), wearing masks (80%),



Figure 3. People with disability .

maintaining distance (76%), and vaccination by 38%. For people with disabilities.

In this study, we also find interesting facts about differences in hygiene behavior between respondents by region. In rural area, hand washing behavior to prevent the spread of Covid-19 reached 83%, wearing masks (87%), maintaining distance (80%) and vaccination (52%). Meanwhile, in urban area, washing hands reached 76%, wearing masks (71%), social distancing (61%) and vaccination (24%).

In addition to interventions related to messages on changes in hygienic behavior, as many as 60% of respondents stated that they had received health equipment during the Covid-19 pandemic in the form of masks and hand-sanitizers.

4. Hygiene Behavior among people with disability and the elderly.

Among the disabled, washing hands and wearing masks are the most frequently practiced hygienic behaviors (73%) while keeping a distance is only 60%, this is due to social restriction policies and limitations in mobility so that they are mostly at home and doesn't come out at all. Compared to people without disabilities, 93% washing hands with soap, wearing masks (84%) and keeping a distance (78%).

Among the elderly, frequently washing hands with soap reached 81%, wearing masks when leaving the house (75%) and keeping a distance (64%). Meanwhile, among the non-elderly the behavior of washing hands is 85%, wearing a mask (82%), and keeping a distance (74%).

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. The need to involve disability figures and organizations to increase public awareness about inclusiveness and the importance of hygiene behavior in handling the pandemic by optimizing the role of television as a medium of information that can reach many groups.**
- 2. Provision of information sources and inclusive water and sanitation facilities to encourage sustainable hygienic behavior in the community.**
- 3. Develop fact-based policies and budget provision to promote inclusive disaster management programs as part of the agenda for sustainable development**

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