Sanitation-related illnesses are the most common ailments in the households interviewed. 19% of survey households had a family member who had sought treatment for typhoid in the previous six months. 20.4% of households who had a child suffering diarrhoea (cases) had a family member who had been treated for typhoid in the six months before survey, compared to 17% of households whose child did not.

Although most households use piped water, some are using sources that may be easily contaminated, leading to diarrhoea. 38% of households in which a child had diarrhoea use water from unimproved sources, compared to 36% of households in which the child did not have diarrhoea.

Caregivers’ exposure to sanitation messages appears to contribute to reduced risk of diarrhoea in a child. 64.5% of caregivers of the children who did not have diarrhoea had heard messages on sanitation and hygiene in the past 12 months, compared to 54% of those in the other group.

Recommendations:

- Improve access to safe water: the county needs to improve faecal sludge management and mobilise communities to build and use improved toilets
- Take action to discourage open defecation
- Conduct public education campaigns to address personal and household sanitation and hygiene, to reduce contamination of water and the environment
- Allocate adequate resources to sanitation programmes.

In Kericho County, many families have poor access to improved water and sanitation facilities, particularly in rural areas, which are not linked to the formal sewerage systems and piped water. This poses a serious risk as families have to make do with water that may be contaminated as they tap into unprotected sources, and especially if they consume the water without any treatment at home. A recent study sought to establish the effects of poor sanitation on public health, the environment and well-being in Kericho County. What do the findings show?

Poor disposal of faecal matter contributes to contamination of the environment and water sources. 29% of faecal matter in Kericho county is unsafely disposed of and may end up in the environment. E. coli bacteria was found in the public water points tested. 54% of households interviewed do not treat their drinking water at all.

Caregivers’ poor hand-washing habits may be contributing to the risk of diarrhoea in children. 50% of caregivers in the households in which a child had diarrhoea reported washing hands using soap and water, far fewer than in the households without a child with diarrhoea (60%) 43% respondents in the households where a child had diarrhoea used only water to wash their hands after using the toilet, compared to 35% in the other group.

For more information on these findings, see report: Understanding the Effects of Poor Sanitation on Public Health, the Environment and Well-being – Kericho County. 2018. Report of Research Findings published by the V4CP programme.

Contact: SNV Kenya Country Office Ngong Lane, off Ngong Road Nairobi, Kenya
Tel.: +254 724 463355 Email: kenya@snv.org

This infographic is the result of the study entitled Understanding the Effects of Poor Sanitation on Public Health, the Environment and Well-being commissioned by SNV Netherlands Development Organisation (SNV) as part of the Voice for Change Partnership (V4CP) programme which advocates for county governments to address water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) issues affecting their communities. The V4CP programme is implemented by SNV in collaboration with the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA). The research was conducted by the Centre for Population Health Research & Management (CPHRM).