

“Wear With Care” A Campaign to promote the Rational use of Examination Gloves



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Background

Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) is committed to reducing its environmental footprint, and purchased goods, particularly single-use medical items like gloves, are a major contributor to emissions.

The unnecessary use of non-sterile examination gloves in healthcare settings results in substantial health risks such as **healthcare-associated infections** (HAIs), increased **costs**, and **environmental harm** through manufacture, transport, and incineration, consuming energy and resources.

MSF has seen a **significant increase** in glove consumption, from 2 gloves per patient admission in 2012 to 4.5 in 2019, to 7 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This increase highlighted a potential gap between practice and recommendations.

Objective

The campaign overall objective is to **reduce the unnecessary use of non-sterile examination gloves**.

Methodology

The “Wear with Care” (WWC) campaign is a multifaceted intervention piloted in MSF’s **primary healthcare facilities in Lebanon** for nine months (June 2023 – February 2024).

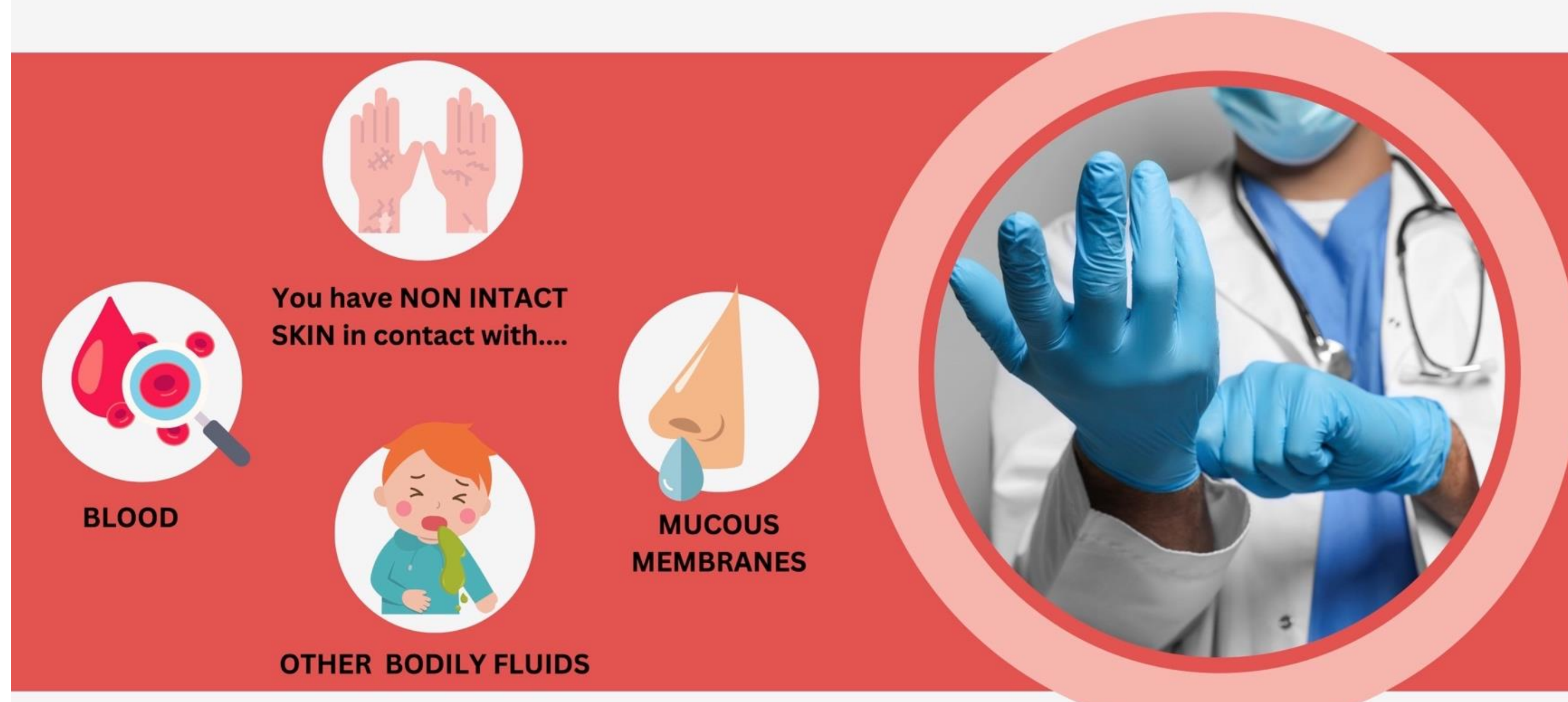
It targeted **medical and non-medical staff** who use non-sterile gloves. The approach aimed to reduce unnecessary use through a **behaviour change campaign**.

Key activities included: a kick-off launch presentation, **tailored communication materials** (posters introduced in two batches based on assessments), and **periodical training sessions** and refreshers using a participatory approach. A **dedicated Campaign Manager** with an Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) profile oversaw the implementation.

Data collection involved baseline, midline, and endline **surveys** on knowledge and attitudes, as well as regular **audits** conducted through direct observation using a mobile app, providing informal onsite feedback, and monthly monitoring of glove consumption via **pharmacy records**. Interventions were tailored based on insights from baseline and midline assessments.

#WearWithCare

Always assess the risk before wearing gloves



& think about the planet...
NO RISK = NO GLOVES!



Results

Audits indicated **improved** medical staff **compliance with hand hygiene** before and after glove use. Survey results showed significant improvement (around 30%) in medical staff understanding of when gloves are recommended, reflecting an improved perception of contamination risk.

However, some staff still perceived the need for gloves for procedures like IV flushes or SC/IM injections.

The most significant impact was a **reduction of approximately 40% in glove usage per patient consultation** during the campaign period.

Barriers identified during audits included **habit, fear of infection, and mistrust in Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)**.

Conclusions

The WWC pilot successfully demonstrated that **unnecessary glove use can be significantly reduced** through targeted interventions aimed at changing the behaviour of healthcare workers.

A **multifaceted approach** centred on understanding and addressing context-specific barriers proved effective.

The campaign contributed to **reducing consumption, improving quality of care, enhancing patient and staff safety, lowering HAI risk, and reducing carbon emissions and plastic waste**.

For any questions, please contact david.renard@brussels.msf.org

Lessons Learned

Reducing glove use requires understanding and addressing **context-specific barriers** such as habits and fear of infection, beyond just providing guidelines. **Tailored communication messages and training materials** based on local assessments are **more effective** in changing attitudes and behaviours. A multifaceted approach, including communication, training, audits, and dedicated staff, is essential for successful implementation and sustainability.

TRANSFORMATIONAL
INVESTMENT
CAPACITY

What's Next ?

Based on the pilot’s success, the next step is to **replicate the WWC campaign across MSF missions** utilising the existing methodology and materials, supported by a dedicated campaign manager. Sustaining change will require regular follow-up observations, training, and refreshers on standard precautions. Future campaigns may consider incorporating additional materials, such as a **learning app** or an **implementation toolkit**.

Multiple projects (e.g., Afghanistan, Kenya, Sierra Leone) have shown interest and **will be replicating the campaign in 2025**.

The communication tools were already translated and reused in all MSF projects during the **World Hand Hygiene Day**, promoted by the World Health Organisation every year, on **May 5th**.



Among single-use medical items used by MSF, Non-Sterile Examination Gloves Rank #1 in terms of quantities procured, total weight transported and environmental impact.

