Health in Your Hands
Meena is a little girl who lives in a village with her parents, her grandmother, her brother Raju, and her baby sister, Rani. Mithu, the parrot, is her best friend.

In many ways, Meena is like any other little girl you know. She is friendly but is not afraid to ask questions.

Share in Meena's adventures as she laughs, climbs trees, asks questions and solves problems, and shows you all the things that a little girl can do.

Script: Deepa Balsavar
Original concept: Neill Mckee
Technical and creative input: Geeta Athreya, Akhilesh Gautam, Renu Ghosh, Gurinder Gulati, Alka Malhotra, Henk Norden, Rachna Sharma, K Suresh
Artistic development and character design: Ram Mohan
Comic book adaptation: Deepa Balsavar, Harsha Mehta
Creative guidance and project management: Nuzhat Shahzadi, UNICEF - Rosa
Produced with support from The Government of Norway
Hi, I am Meena! Will you do something for me? Look at your hands. Are they clean? Tell me after you read this story.
Our teacher was taking a lesson on illnesses like diarrhoea, dysentery and worms. They are really bad illnesses and many children fall ill with them.

How do we get these illnesses, teacher?

Oof! My stomach hurts!
Did you know that germs cause most of these illnesses? They get on our hands and under our fingernails in the latrine or from playing in mud and dirt or from animals. When we put these dirty fingers to our mouth or eat without washing our hands, then the germs get inside our bodies.
Teacher explained that it's quite easy to prevent these illnesses if we are careful about keeping ourselves and especially our hands clean. This is important because germs are very small and cannot be easily seen.

Hands that look clean could still be full of germs!
Then teacher took us outside and showed us the correct way to wash our hands.
It was such fun...

Wash hands in running water.

Scrub well, with soap.
And we were learning at the same time!

Clean between fingers and under nails.

Germs love hiding under nails. So keep them short!
That afternoon Raju and I saw Dipu. He had just come out of the latrine and he hadn’t washed his hands! We told him what we had learnt in school and made him wash his hands well.

Chee, Dipu! No wonder you fall ill so often!

Always wash hands after using the latrine!
We soon discovered that a lot of our friends did not know how important it is to keep hands clean.

Look at what she is doing, Raju!
So we passed on the message of cleanliness to them.
Wash your hands! Wash your hands!

Now tell me—are you sure that your hands are clean? Remember, washing hands prevents illnesses!
Colour this:
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2. Dividing the Mango
3. Will Meena Leave School?
4. Who's Afraid of the Bully?
5. Saving a Life
6. Meena's Three Wishes
7. Say No to Dowry
8. Too Young to Marry
9. Take Care of Girls
10. I Love School
11. It's Got to Be a Boy!
12. Meena in the City
13. A Girls' Story
14. Learning to Love
15. Strangers in the Village
16. Reaching Out
17. Meena and Her Friend
18. It Could Happen to Anyone
19. The Girls Came Back
20. When Meena was Born
21. When Meena was a Little Girl
22. Seeing in the Dark
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United Nations Children's Fund
Regional Office for South Asia
P.O. Box 5815
Lekhnath Marg
Kathmandu, Nepal

Telephone: 977-1-4417082
Facsimile: 977-1-4418461
www.unicef.org

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