PACIFIC HANDWASHING CAMPAIGN 2010-2011 REPORT

CLEAN HANDS SAVE LIVES

July 2011
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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- Tuvalu Association of Non-Governmental Organisation (TANGO), especially to the Director Ms Annie Homasi
- Water Services Team of SOPAC Division
OVERVIEW

Global Handwashing Day (GHD) was created by the Global Public-Private Partnership for Handwashing in 2008 to:

• Foster and support a global culture of handwashing with soap.

• Shine a spotlight on the state of handwashing in every country.

• Raise awareness about the benefits of handwashing with soap.

Global Handwashing Day was originally aimed for children and schools, but later spread to anyone promoting handwashing with soap. Each year, over 200 million people are involved in celebrations in over 100 countries around the world. Global Handwashing is endorsed by a wide array of governments, international institutions, civil society organizations, NGOs, private companies, and individuals.

During Global Handwashing Day students and communities are taught the importance of washing their hands with soap and water at critical times. The slogan “CLEAN HANDS SAVE LIVES” drives the campaign in promoting the importance of handwashing.

INTRODUCTION

In the Pacific region, Global Handwashing Day has been celebrated in some countries in the region by relevant government ministries and local NGOs. In Fiji, the first celebration was in 2008 organised by UNICEF and an NGO Live & Learn Environmental Education (LLEE). In 2010, UNICEF partnered with the Ministry of Health, LLEE and Colgate Palmolive (a private sector) to stage a big celebration in a school in Suva.

As part of its mandate the SOPAC Division through its Water and Sanitation Programme launched the Pacific Handwashing Campaign 2010-2011. A call for proposal was made to the focal points in 14 countries to conduct national celebration and activities.

The objectives of supporting countries in the region for this campaign were i) to support SPC member countries (government ministries and NGOs) in promoting hygiene; ii) to heighten awareness on handwashing with soap and water and; iii) make schools and communities aware that the simple act of handwashing can reduce the spread of diseases such as diarrheal illnesses and respiratory infections.

Five countries responded with their detailed proposed activities together with the budget in response to the call. These included Federated States of Micronesia (Pohnpei Environmental Protection Agency), Tuvalu (Tuvalu Association of Non-Governmental Organisation (TANGO), Tonga (Tonga Community Development Trust (TCDT), Niue (Health Department & National Water Steering Committee of Niue Island (NHD) and Vanuatu (Department of Geology, Mines and Water Resources (DGMWR). Agreements were signed between SPC and each respective agency to implement their campaign for a period of 6 months (October 2010 to March 2011).

The outputs in each county are detailed below.
A. Tonga (Tonga Community Development Trust)

Background

Tonga Community Development Trust was granted TOP$4,000.00 to participate in the Pacific regional initiative to mark Global Handwashing Day. The Tonga campaign supported previous efforts (WSSCC funded project through SOPAC in 2009) whereby 12 schools around the country participated in piloting the promotion of handwashing through awareness and installation of hand washing basins.

The key output of the campaign was the promotion of handwashing with soap and water as part of clean and hygienic lifestyle.

Activities Implemented

1. Television and Radio Programme. A television panel was conducted on 15 October 2010 to mark the Global Hand Washing Day. Members of the Project Implementation Team participated in the program which included representatives from Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health. The program was focused on the theme of global hand washing day and its significance to the health at all levels from individuals, families, schools, communities, country and global. A follow-up television program was conducted in early November 2010 to broadcast the arrangement for the primary schools art competition. The final and third television program was conducted in March 2011 to highlight what had been achieved in 2010 and to discuss with members of the Project Implementation Team the lessons learned.

2. Television/Radio spots. Two television and radio spots were produced previously in 2009 and 2010 respectively and these were re-used during the campaign. The first spot was focused on a young boy who sings the happy birthday jingle while washing his hands and continues to sing when he becomes a teenager. The message is clear that hand washing helps the boy to grow healthy. The second spot was recorded during the school competition with different messages but emphasised the importance of hand washing to health. The two spots were arranged to be played twice a week during the prime time for a month each, three times.

3. Reprinting and distribution of handwashing posters during school visits and presentations

4. School presentation. School competitions focusing on drawing, action songs and poem recital for primary and kindergarten were also conducted during the last quarter of 2010. During the schools visits in preparation for the competition, the project team conducted presentations on the importance of hand washing and the health implications of such an act to the 12 pilot schools in Vava’u, Ha’apai, ‘Eua and Tongatapu.

A major achievement in this project campaign was that TCDT Project Team worked with representatives from the Ministry of Education Curriculum Development Unit. Before the end of 2010, they had successfully incorporated hand washing and hygiene behaviours into primary school curriculum.
Lessons Learned

- Communication tools used proved effective in raising awareness and to transpire behaviour change among the target audience in schools. Television and radio spots and programmes are useful to target the wider community.

B. Niue (Health Department & National Water Steering Committee of Niue Island)

Background

The project was titled “Safe Clean Hands for All” and was targeted at students and teachers, youth groups and communities. The main aim of the campaign was to promote the importance of proper hygiene with soap amongst communities. The Niue Health Department & National Water Steering Committee of Niue Island was granted NZ$4,500.00 to carry out the Pacific Handwashing Campaign 2010-2011.

The project looked to raise awareness by promoting the importance of proper hand washing techniques at all levels in the community to prevent the spread of diseases and to encourage all community sectors to actively promote and support the concept of handwashing. Introducing this concept in schools strengthened the basic knowledge and awareness to the importance of handwashing to support the healthy school initiatives and overall lifestyles, with lots of emphasis on good hygiene practices and disease prevention.

Activities Implemented

1. Launching of Handwashing Day Campaign at Niue Primary School with the opening remarks from the Minister of Health and the Director of Health and Education. The Niue National Water Committee was also present. The school presented some items and a theme song for the campaign and also the presentation of the resource materials (i.e. handwashing stickers, buckets, soaps)

2. Production of TV clips which were aired through the national television to create awareness to the wider communities.

3. Production of handwashing flyers as part of promotional materials in the communities and in the work places. This increased the number of people washing their hands using proper hygiene practices.

4. Fortnightly radio programmes by the Ministry of Health emphasising the concept of handwashing

5. Production of a banner that was displayed at the village during community visits.
Lessons Learned

- Targeting schools and communities separately adds strength to the handwashing campaign.

C. Vanuatu (Department of Geology, Mines and Water Resources)

Background

The Vanuatu Handwashing Campaign was aimed at increasing awareness and understanding about the importance of handwashing with soap as an effective and affordable way to prevent diseases. The Handwashing Programme in Port Villa was aimed at targeting school children aged 1-5 in pre-schools, primary schools and communities. The Department of Geology, Mines and Water Resources was granted VUV$109,000 to support their handwashing activities for 2010-2011.

Activities Implemented

1. Radio talk back shows. A 1 hour talk back show with Radio Vanuatu was aired on the 14th of October 2010 to give the general public awareness and information on the significance of Global Handwashing Day. Guest speakers on the show included Erie Sami from Department of Geology, Mines and Water Resources and Nelly Hiam from Environmental Health.

2. Celebration of Global Handwashing Day and School Awareness Campaign. The school awareness campaign was carried out in selected pre-schools and primary schools. These schools also took part in the celebration of Global Handwashing Day (October 15, 2010) event throughout Port Vila. The pre-schools and primary schools in the Port Vila area included We Care Pre School, Vila East Primary School, Port Vila International and Child Care Pre School. All the students participated in a song reminding everyone to wash their hands before handling their food, after using the toilet and after playing. They also learned the proper technique of handwashing with soap and water. The main highlight of the event was the on-spot quiz prizes.

3. Community awareness in Siviri Community. On the 16th of October 2010, children in Siviri Community at North Efate enjoyed a day of learning about germs, how they spread and how diseases such as diarrhoea and pneumonia could be prevented by the simple act of washing hands with soap. Songs were also included along with practical ‘how to properly wash your hands’ activity. Stickers were given out to children in the community to paste on their bathroom/toilet and kitchen walls as constant reminder to always wash hands.
4. Community awareness in Nguna Community. On the 18th of October 2010 awareness was carried out with children in Nguna Community. On spot quiz and prizes were given and the practical session on proper handwashing. Stickers and posters were given out to children to remind them on the importance of handwashing.

5. Newspaper article. A newspaper article was prepared and published in the Vanuatu Times. The articles highlighted the main activities that were carried out in schools and communities during the Global Handwashing Day event from the 15th – 18th October 2010.

Lessons Learned

- The awareness campaigns proved to be quiet effective especially with children in the communities who were quiet receptive of the idea of handwashing and understood the importance of washing hands at critical times.

- Use of private sector is useful e.g. Digicel Company assisted with the production of 10,000 “Wash your hands” stickers which were distributed to the selected pre-school and primary schools and in the community awareness campaign; and Pacific Passion Company in the distribution of soaps in schools and communities

D. Federated States of Micronesia (Pohnpei Environmental Protection Agency)

Background

The main goal was to improve the level of understanding of handwashing and environmental health in schools and communities. Pohnpei EPA was granted US$3,000.00 to support their handwashing campaign activities.

Activities Implemented

1. School visits. A total of 27 schools were visited to promote global handwashing and personal hygiene amongst students and teachers. The facilitator conducted some hand washing programs by showing students and teachers the proper way of handwashing and provided some pamphlets, stickers and posters as a reminder to the schools. Students were also provided with soaps and Clorox pocket to practice proper handwashing.

2. Community visits. Almost 10 communities were visited by the EPA team as part of its community awareness. The EPA facilitator engaged the communities with some activities that highlighted the proper technique of handwashing and when to wash hands. Community members were also given some posters, stickers, soaps that they can use to practice proper
handwashing at home and as constant reminders to them. There was a session with the parents to teach their children good hygiene behaviour at homes as well.

3. Radio Announcement. An announcement over the radio was carried out as part of the awareness campaign. The announcement was to enforce the messages to the schools and communities that were visited and to inform those communities that had not.

**Lessons Learned**

- The school and community visits proved to be quiet effective, people now know and understand the proper way of washing hands with soap and water.

- There can be logistical challenges (transport and staff) during community visits hence proper planning is essential.

**E. Tuvalu (Tuvalu Association of Non-Governmental Organisations)**

**Background**

TANGO has been very active in the promotion and advocacy of WASH programmes in Tuvalu. Most of their activities are in schools with handwashing demonstrations and actual involvement of school children and their teachers in the programme. With regular monitoring checks and follow up with the schools, handwashing is now part of the school routine programme especially before students break for recess and lunch. TANGO was granted A$3,500.00 to carry out the handwashing campaign.

The aim of the campaign was to complement their ongoing WASH programme.

**Activities Implemented**

1. School activities. The Global Handwashing Day was celebrated together with World Water Day 2011 in schools. Students from Nauti Primary School, Fetuvalu High and the SDA School participated in handwashing demonstration at the celebration; students were able to view hand washing educational videos and show their creativity with colouring activities. Posters and stickers were also distributed to the schools.
2. Follow up visits to the schools. After the celebration there were school visits by the TANGO staff to conduct some sessions with the students on good hygiene behaviour.

Lessons Learned

- Posters and stickers are useful reminder tools for handwashing.
- Supporting on-going WASH programmes in schools adds value to investment.

CONCLUSION

The Pacific Handwashing Campaign 2010-2011 was successfully implemented in schools and communities across selected countries. The awareness materials developed by SOPAC Division (posters and stickers) was well received by implementing partners on ground and distributed widely across the region as reminders on the importance of handwashing.

It is hoped that a similar Pacific campaign can be coordinated by SPC for other countries in the region that did not participate in this inaugural campaign. SPC will endeavour to explore funding opportunities towards this on behalf of its member countries, and its role as the secretariat of the Pacific WASH Coalition.
Appendix 1

The layout and text for the poster and sticker that was developed for the Pacific Handwashing Campaign by the SOPAC Division.