

Global Handwashing Day

Our Hands, Our Future Handwashing with Soap Helps Reduce Stunting



Global Handwashing Day
October 16, 2017



Venue:
Isinya Primary School
Kajiado County

Simple, affordable act that saves lives



Dr. Cleopa Mailu, EGH

MESSAGE FROM THE CABINET SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Every year, approximately 30,000 lives are lost in Kenya due to incidences of diarrhoea, which also accounts for 16 percent of deaths of children below five years.

Of all childhood infectious illnesses, diarrhoeal diseases are thought to have the greatest effect on nutrition by reducing appetite, altering feeding patterns, and decreasing absorption of nutrients, hence affecting growth. Yet, a simple act of handwashing reduces diarrhoeal disease prevalence by 48 percent and acute respiratory tract infections by 25 percent.

The Kenya Environmental Sanitation and Hygiene Policy (2016-2030) commits the Government of the Republic of Kenya at both national and county levels to pursue robust strategies that will not only enable all Kenyans to enjoy their right to the highest attainable standards of sanitation, but also to a clean and healthy environment as guaranteed by the Constitution of Kenya, setting the path towards achieving Kenya Vision 2030.

Handwashing with soap is an affordable and effective way to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 6, by having the power to improve access to education for children, protect the health of patients and communities, and reduce inequities.

Promoting the practice of handwashing with soap will consequently help us as a country as we work towards a future where every potential will be realised. **"Our Hands, Our Future"**.

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF HEALTH



Mr. Julius Korir, CBS

Cost has been deemed to be inhibitive and a barrier to effective handwashing. However, investments in proper handwashing are very cost effective, and can also maximise the health benefits of other interventions such as access to clean and safe water, access to safe sanitation infrastructure and nutrition promotion.

Through Medium Term Plan III, the Ministry will focus on supporting sanitation and hygiene related activities, including behaviour change towards handwashing with soap and running water.

Various partners have also supported the Ministry in promoting hand washing nationally and at the county level.

Everyone can protect themselves, their families, and their communities through handwashing with soap. It requires few resources—just soap and a small amount of clean water—yet the benefits are huge. **"Our Hands, Our Future"**.

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL SERVICES, MINISTRY OF HEALTH



Dr. Jackson Kioko, OGW

According to the Health Management Information Systems (HMIS) 2017, Kenya recorded outpatient turnout of 37.2 percent suffering from hygiene related diseases, such as respiratory infections, diarrhoea, typhoid and pneumonia.

Among children, diarrhoeal diseases and intestinal worm infestation contribute to a high disease burden and mortality, with diarrhoea contributing to 40 percent of deaths among under-five children. As a result, each year, approximately 19,500 Kenyans, including 17,100 children under the age of five years, die from diarrhoea – nearly 90 percent of the cases directly attributed to poor water, sanitation and hygiene.

All these could be reduced by 48 percent with a simple act of washing hands with soap and water.

The Ministry is committed to sensitise and create awareness on the importance of hand washing with soap to dramatically reduce the risk of diarrhoea, pneumonia and other serious illnesses and death. **"Our Hands, Our Future"**.

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH, MINISTRY OF HEALTH



Kepha M. Ombacho, PhD, MBS

This year alone, the country has experienced over 3,000 cases and 56 deaths of cholera from the 18 counties where outbreaks were reported. These figures are beside other diarrhoeal diseases, which can be easily contained through good handwashing practice.

Handwashing with soap works by removing bacteria and viruses from hands before they get a chance to cause infections or spread to other people. It is the responsibility of each Kenyan to observe good hygiene practices.

The Ministry will continue to sensitise the public on the benefits of handwashing with soap, and target school children as agents of change. **"Our Hands, Our Future"**.

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MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR, KAJIADO COUNTY

According to Kajiado County Health statistics, diarrhoea, worm infestation, eye infections, and upper respiratory tract infections are among the top 10 causes of morbidity that are closely related to poor sanitation and hygiene practices. These diseases can be prevented by a simple act of handwashing.

The County Department of Health, through the Public Health Unit, has spearheaded the reduction of sanitation and hygiene-related diseases in order to improve key health outcomes. These interventions include:

- Advocacy, communication and social mobilization on handwashing: Through enforcement of the Food Drug and Chemical substances ACT Cap 254, all public eating places and other food establishments have installed hand washing facilities with soap and running water to intensify the handwashing campaign.
- All households within the 50 percent



Joseph ole Lenku

coverage of Community Health Units in the county have installed handwashing facilities using simple, affordable, locally available materials. These include leaky tins and tippy taps. Kajiado County is one of the trachoma endemic areas, with a prevalence of active Trachoma at 28.1 percent and blinding Trachoma at 3.3 percent, which is above WHO standards.

Trachoma prevention and control interventions through face washing for reduction of transmission have been intensified using existing structures.

The County Government of Kajiado will increase hand and face washing campaigns in schools and in the community by increasing water infrastructure and proving water tanks, thereby increasing access to water.

Engagement of all stakeholders in the county will be key to entrenching handwashing habit towards reducing hygiene related diseases.

I call upon all stakeholders in WASH, who include UNICEF, Amref Health Africa, World Vision, WASH Alliance, Neighbours Initiative Alliance and World Friends, among others, to come together and support the hand and face washing campaign for sustained behaviour change.

"Our Hands, Our Future"