

GLOBAL HANDWASHING DAY

15 OCTOBER 2015

ACTIVITY REPORT

Implementing Partners: Oxfam, UNICEF, IRC, Save the Children, PLAN International



Global Handwashing Day Procession



Handwashing Demonstration



Oxfam staff and volunteers in GHWD t-shirts: “Clean Hands Save Lives!”

On October 15, 2015, Burundian refugees in Nyarugusu Camp gathered to celebrate Global Handwashing Day. Oxfam, in partnership with UNICEF, IRC, Save the Children, and PLAN International, organized the GHWD event to raise awareness of the importance of handwashing in the prevention of communicable diseases such as typhoid and cholera.

The day-long event kicked off with a march from the front gate of Nyarugusu Camp to the football arena in Zone 10. Over 200 celebrants—including schoolchildren, their parents, hygiene promotion volunteers (HPVs), and members of community theatre groups—participated in the procession. Participants held banners and placards with key messages in Kiswahili and Kirundi, reminding viewers of the critical times of hand-washing as a simple and effective way to prevent disease transmission and save lives. Puppeteers with giant puppets added an element of entertainment to the march.

At the conclusion of the march, celebrants arrived at 20 hand-washing stations (tippy-taps) bordering the arena. HPVs were on hand to encourage the participants to wash their hands with soap and water before entering the arena, as a way of further promoting the practice.

Although the event had been officially planned for some 400 people, the GHWD event ended up attracting over 2,000 people—primarily Burundian refugees from all age and gender categories—from the surrounding areas. Guests of honour included representatives from UNICEF, the MOHSW, and the MHA.

GLOBAL HANDWASHING DAY AGENDA

Time	Event
9:00 – 10:00	Procession from gate to arena
10:00 – 10:15	Introductory Speech by UNICEF
10:15 – 11:00	Children’s Program: - Songs and drama (IRC and Save the Children)
11:00 – 11:45	Adults’ Program: - Drummers: IRC - Oxfam Drama Group - Hygiene Quiz -
11:45 – 12:15	Handwashing Demonstration: PLAN International
12:15 – 13:00	Speeches: - MOHSW Representative - Agency Representative: Oxfam -Camp Manager
13:00	Refreshments

The day’s events used various forms of “edutainment” to encourage good handwashing practices and to underscore the message that washing one’s hands with soap is an easy, affordable, and effective way to save lives. Children’s groups organized by IRC and Save the Children performed a number of songs and choreographed dances that emphasized the benefits of cleaning one’s hands with soap. Following the children’s program, community theatre groups organized by Oxfam performed several highly entertaining dramas on the theme of handwashing. The theatre groups’ skits illustrated the critical times of handwashing, using a combination of tragedy and humour to dramatize the consequences of neglecting good hygiene practices.

Celebrants also enjoyed a Hygiene Quiz organized by Oxfam and IRC. Participants were invited to answer questions about *how* and *why* to wash one’s hands. The participant who answered a question correctly was awarded a bar of soap. The Hygiene Quiz was followed by a Handwashing Demonstration, in which the guests of honour were invited to use the arena’s handwashing stations



to show the audience proper techniques for thoroughly cleaning one's hands with soap. During the transitions between activities, a traditional Burundian drumming and dance troupe kept up the celebrants' attention through fantastic high-energy performances.

The day's events concluded with moving speeches from the guests of honour. Each guest of honour emphasized the importance of keeping good personal hygiene and a clean environment, in order to stop the spread of diseases such as typhoid, cholera, and dysentery. Celebrants were reminded that these diseases can be deadly, particularly for young children. The speeches reiterated that hand-washing is an easy, effective, and affordable way to prevent the spread of deadly diseases. Finally, the close of the event featured an excellent live Congolese band performing songs and dances.

Overall, the Global Handwashing Day event for Burundian refugees was a huge success. Celebrants came away with the knowledge that each and every person is empowered to save lives through simple handwashing with soap.