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Water and Sustainable Development
From vision to action



Global Public-Private Partnership for Handwashing (PPPHW)

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Short summary

Water, sanitation, and hygiene are cornerstones of development. Each of these three areas contribute in significant ways to public health, education, equity, and ultimately the economic prosperity of a country. However, for these benefits to be realized the provision of services alone is not enough. This is particularly true as it relates to hygiene. For proper handwashing to occur, the hardware required for handwashing, such as running water and soap, must be readily available. A handwashing station alone does not result in sustained use or behaviour change, but it can be designed in such a way to trigger handwashing.

The significance of the behaviour change component to handwashing is not to be understated, particularly as it relates to the enactment of the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals. As such, this session will share success stories of tools for implementation from the frontlines of handwashing behaviour change based on new thinking regarding habits and drivers.

Specifically, this session will explore the role of human-centred design in the development of handwashing stations by focusing on the Water and Sanitation Program's (WSP) development of the Mrembo handwashing station. The role of habit formation, partnerships, and the private sector will be interwoven throughout the presentation, as these are topics that are essential to improving handwashing behaviour change at scale.

Please note, the Global Public-Private Partnership for Handwashing (PPPHW) is a coalition of international stakeholders. The organizations whose interventions we will present are members of our Steering Committee.

Keywords

Consider vulnerable groups in access to sanitation; Combat water borne diseases

Issues addressed

WASH (inequalities, schools, health centres, refugee camps, women and girls): Hygiene behaviour change; This presentation will explore the role that innovation in development of handwashing technology has and will continue to play in handwashing behaviour change. The concepts discussed are applicable to schools, healthcare centres, and households.

Tools for implementation

Technology: The approach used by the case study presented is that of human-centred design, where the development of handwashing technology is driven by local demands and preferences.

Who is involved?: The Mrembo handwashing station was developed in collaboration by the WSP, the Kenyan Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation, and the IFC as part of the Selling Sanitation Program.

What objectives?: The intervention used human-centred design to develop a handwashing product that would meet the needs and desires of consumers at the base of the pyramid.

Implementation challenges: One of the challenges with human-centered design in general is that the resulting products are context-specific, and thus might not be applicable in other markets. As such, they can be costly to develop.

Main task/activities undertaken /Tools used: The implementation staff conducted a deep dive into consumer needs and preferences and developed prototypes of suitable handwashing stations. Potential consumers then provided feedback on the prototypes. The Mrembo handwashing station prototype was developed as a result of this research and these consultations.

Main outcomes / impacts (what has changed?): A prototype for the Mrembo handwashing station was developed as a result of this study. The next stages will be manufacturing and distribution of the product.

Lessons Learned:

Triggers: We know from research into habit formation that visual cues and triggering are important components for the development of a habit of handwashing. As such, a handwashing station should be in close proximity to where it should be used. The mirror included in the Mrembo design acts as an additional visual cue, whereby users will be drawn to the handwashing station to look into the mirror.

Drivers: Emotional drivers, such as nurturing and disgust, are powerful motivators of handwashing behaviour change.

Barriers: There are a number of barriers to using human-centered design. It can be costly and time consuming, for example.

What has worked well?: This case is an example of a successful development of a prototype.

What can be improved?: There is not yet information available on the product's success in the marketplace. This will be the next challenge.

The way forward: Clearly there is a role for human-centred design in the development of handwashing stations. In addition to the Mrembo, there are lessons to be learned also from the development of the HappyTap, which we can also highlight during our presentation. Handwashing behaviour can be facilitated through the use of better handwashing technologies that are appropriate for users, affordable, accessible, and aspirational. Using the concepts of human-centred design is one way to ensure that the handwashing technologies developed are utilized by consumers and help facilitate lasting behaviour change. Furthermore, new thinking regarding habit formation can be better incorporated into the development of tools for hygiene behaviour change. These concepts can be applied to the development of handwashing stations and technologies, too.

Links

<http://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/917ef1004fba4f3fa4e0098cb14b9/SellingSan-HandWash-Prototype-Testing.pdf?MOD=AJPERES>
