



Press Release: 1st October 2016

PZ Cussons and Concern Universal launch Nigeria's biggest Global Handwashing Day campaign!

Today sees the launch of a month-long campaign to promote hand hygiene among school children that will be the largest celebration of Global Handwashing Day ever in Nigeria! For the third year in a row, UK-based NGO Concern Universal and hand-hygiene experts PZ Cussons are joining forces with some of Nigeria's top entertainers to inspire a generation of school children to adopt the life-saving habit of handwashing with soap. This year, Premier Cool Deo - one of Nigeria's leading antiseptic soaps - joins the campaign alongside the UK's most popular soap - Carex - to enable more children, special guests and prizes to be involved than before.

Global Handwashing Day is an annual worldwide celebration involving over 200 million people coming together on 15th October to promote a simple and life-saving message—handwashing with soap saves lives. Hygiene-related diseases such as diarrhoea cause 1 in 5 Nigerian children to die each year, but almost half of these deaths are preventable simply by washing hands with soap. However, research suggests that as few as 10% of Nigerian school children wash their hands regularly and effectively. The key to addressing this situation is to 'make handwashing a habit' – the theme for this year's Global Handwashing Day.

As habits take up to 4 weeks to form, we are holding a month-long campaign to engage children with fun and creative activities to promote the handwashing habit. At events across Nigeria, children will be inspired by songs recorded exclusively by Sunny Neji and 2Face Idibia, and empowered as 'Hygiene Heroes' - handwashing promoters trained to transfer the life-saving habit to their schools, families and communities. The campaign will reach its climax on Global Handwashing Day itself at a major event in Lagos at which our Campaign Ambassador Sunny Neji will perform alongside his band, comedian Koffi and other special guests.

Throughout October, thousands of children from more than 200 schools will take part in events across Southern Nigeria. Children will take part in handwashing games and demonstrations that will empower them to return to their schools and communities and spread the campaign's vital message. Schools will also compete to show that they have the 'CareX Factor' – this talent competition enables children to get creative about hand washing by performing their own version of Sunny Neji's campaign anthem 'Wash Your Hands O'. The events kick-off in Cross River and Benue States, with the campaign culminating in a major celebration event in Lagos on Global Handwashing Day itself – Saturday, 15th October – where schools will compete against each other for fantastic prizes and the chance to perform with their musical heroes.

How to get involved

Sunny Neji & 2face's exclusive campaign songs and videos will be aired on television and radio, and can be viewed at **Concern Universal's YouTube channel**: www.youtube.com/channel/UCkfOo_sqbk5YnBdy9ShIZkw

Follow the campaign online at the Facebook pages of [Concern Universal NIGERIA](#), [Carex Nigeria](#) and [Premier Cool Deo Nigeria](#) and post with the hashtags **#WashYourHandsO** and **#Global HandwashingDay** to help spread the campaign's message, showcase your talents and also stand a chance to win fantastic prizes!

Notes for Editors

PZ Cussons is a global manufacturer of personal healthcare products and consumer goods. It has a special focus on Africa where it has operated for over a century from its base in Nigeria. The **PZ Cussons Foundation** was established in 2007 as a demonstration of the company's commitment to Nigeria and its aim to improve the wellbeing of the communities in which it operates. It coordinates the company's social responsibility projects in the area of health, education and water. More information is available at www.pzcussons.com

Concern Universal is an international development and relief organisation established in the UK in 1976. We operate in 9 countries in Africa, Asia and South America. We receive funding from donors including the EU, UN and the governments of the UK, USA, Australia and Ireland. In Nigeria, Concern Universal has been implementing community development projects since 2001 in partnership with the federal, state and local governments and civil society organisations. More information is available at www.concern-universal.org

This campaign is part of a wider five-year initiative that Concern Universal are implementing, **Rural Sanitation & Hygiene Promotion in Nigeria (RUSHPIN)**, which is empowering 2 million people living in rural communities in the country's South-East to sustainably improve their sanitation and hygiene practices. Although funded by the UN's **Global Sanitation Fund**, unlike most donor projects, the **Government of Nigeria** is the driving force behind the initiative and has committed to matching the UN's funds to reach twice as many people. More information is available at www.wsscc.org/global-sanitation-fund/

Carex Soap is the UK's most popular soap brand and is available to buy in stores across Nigeria. For many years, Carex Soap has proudly supported educational events for schools in Africa - including Ghana & Kenya - to foster a culture of handwashing with soap. In Nigeria, Carex works with Concern Universal to spread a handwashing culture to thousands of school children. More information is available at www.carex.com.ng

Premier Cool Deo is one of Nigeria's leading antiseptic bar soaps that is trusted by millions of Nigerians to give you 24 hours maximum freshness. Premier Cool Deo soap contains real menthol extracts that give you that icy-cool feel, a refreshing long-lasting fragrance and an antibacterial ingredient that helps preserve your freshness all day long. More information is available at www.premiercool.com.ng

Photos from previous campaigns accompany this Press Release.

For interviews with Sunny Neji, Koffi and the campaign organisers, or more information, please contact:

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