



2023

Global Handwashing Partnership Annual Report



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About the Global Handwashing Partnership

The Global Handwashing Partnership is a public-private partnership working to advance handwashing with soap as a fundamental component of health and community development. The partnership serves as a global advocate and knowledge hub for hand hygiene programming. As a global leader, the Global Handwashing Partnership supports the prioritization of handwashing within programs, strategies, and policies at the local, national, and global level.

The Global Handwashing Partnership engages a broad network of hand hygiene champions, with partners from government agencies, multilateral organizations, private corporations, nongovernmental organizations, and academic institutions. Steering committee members are listed in Figure 1 to the right, with a full list of partners available at the end of this report.



Figure 1. 2023 Steering Committee Members

Why Hand Hygiene?

Hand hygiene is one of the most important measures to prevent the spread of infectious diseases. Children who practice regular handwashing are up to **50% less likely to contract pneumonia** and **28-43% less likely to experience diarrheal episodes**. Likewise, improved hand hygiene can prevent up to **50% of infections** acquired during health care delivery.

Good hand hygiene not only matters for health – it can remove barriers to **education, child development, nutrition, economic opportunity, and equity**. Proper handwashing supports efforts to improve education by reducing missed school days and preventing diseases that hinder critical child development. These cross-cutting benefits can ensure the achievement of multiple Sustainable Development Goals.

Yet, billions of people do not have access to proper hand hygiene facilities. Recent data suggests **2 billion people globally lack a handwashing facility** with water and soap in their home. Achieving universal access to basic hygiene services by 2030 requires at least **a threefold increase in the current rate of progress**.

Smart investments now will prepare us better for future disease outbreaks. Achieving universal hand hygiene by 2030 in all domestic settings would cost **US\$11 billion**, and yield health and economic benefits for everyone.

Ultimately, good hand hygiene creates a safer and healthier future for all. We must work together to achieve universal hand hygiene and ensure good hand hygiene remains a mainstay in public health interventions.



ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

2023 Activity Highlights

In accordance with the 2020-2024 strategic plan, the Global Handwashing Partnership implements activities based on its mission and strategic objectives, highlighted below.

Promote clean hands for all through advocacy efforts

Serve as a knowledge hub to share evidence and resources on handwashing and hand hygiene programming

Ensure the Global Handwashing Partnership is sustainable for the long-term

This report reflects advocacy, knowledge management, and coordination highlights implemented throughout the year. While the objectives and supporting activities of the Global Handwashing Partnership are broken down into three objectives (left), it should be noted that activities often support two or three of these goals, demonstrating the interconnectedness of the partnership's objectives.

Activities reported allow the Global Handwashing Partnership to track progress toward its mission, which is to improve global health and development by acting as the **preeminent global advocate and knowledge hub** on handwashing and hand hygiene programming to achieve its vision of **clean hands for all**.

Advocacy Highlights

Global Handwashing Day

Global Handwashing Day is an annual global advocacy day celebrated every October 15. The day is dedicated to elevating the importance of handwashing at the local, regional, and global level and serves as a platform for advocacy to key stakeholders.

National-level advocacy

National-level advocacy efforts focus on strengthening the enabling environment at the country level. Incorporating hand hygiene in national plans, policies, and programs can ensure hand hygiene is properly funded and progress is tracked.

Integrated advocacy

Hand hygiene is a cross-cutting issue with impacts across multiple sectors. It is critical to mainstream focus on hand hygiene beyond traditional water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) actors and build advocates within related sectors, such as nutrition, education, and health.

Global Handwashing Day

Global Handwashing Day is an annual global advocacy day celebrated every October 15. The day is dedicated to promoting handwashing with soap and elevating the issue at the local, regional, and global level.

Every year, the Global Handwashing Partnership leads the planning, facilitation and reporting of Global Handwashing Day. Since its inception in 2008, Global Handwashing Day has evolved from a day of *awareness* to a day of *action*.

The 2023 Global Handwashing Day theme, “**Clean Hands are Within Reach,**” emphasized the need to work systemically and as a collective to ensure access and practice of hand hygiene. Leveraging the increase in political will and lessons learned in recent years, this Global Handwashing Day called on **governments** to strengthen national hand hygiene efforts and track hand hygiene progress using the [Hand Hygiene Acceleration](#)

[Framework Tool](#) (more information on this tool on Page 11). To sustain these national efforts, the Day called on **donors** to increase their investments in programs and national plans/strategies that promote hand hygiene.

Global Handwashing Day also called on **businesses** to contribute toward resilient hand hygiene systems through partnerships, research, policies, financing, and innovation, and for hand hygiene infrastructure and policies to be prioritized within **institutions**.

Academics must also conduct further research to fill hand hygiene knowledge gaps, with focus on hand hygiene behavior change and return on investments from hand hygiene interventions. As a central focus, Global Handwashing Day called on **advocates** to continue to raise awareness of the importance of hand hygiene within their communities and make the case for hand hygiene investment.

Global Handwashing Day

Resources

In 2023, the Global Handwashing Partnership produced a series of resources to support Global Handwashing Day celebrants. Resources include a social media toolkit, fact sheet, community forum, and various digital assets for Global Handwashing Day. Resources are available in English, French, and Spanish on the Global Handwashing Partnership website [here](#).

Youth Contest

To increase engagement among a younger target audience, the Global Handwashing Partnership facilitated the first-ever “Creating Clean Hands” Contest. The contest aimed to encourage youth (18 years or under) to express their ideas and creativity through a short music video promoting

clean hands. More details on this year’s contest can be found [here](#). Creative entries from countries around the world were submitted and the contest crowned its first-ever winner in Mia from the Philippines. Congratulations Mia!

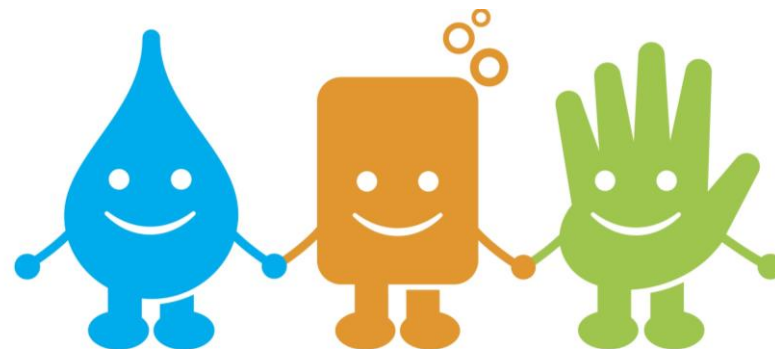
Annual Event

On top of facilitating Global Handwashing Day each year, the Global Handwashing Partnership hosts an annual event to celebrate Global Handwashing Day. This year, the event aimed to inspire action by showcasing what has been done at the global, country, and individual level.

Ms. Nga Nguyen (USAID) provided opening remarks, setting the scene for the event and sharing updates on progress that has been made. The event included two panel discussions – one showcasing global

leadership and one showcasing country leadership. The global panel illustrated the power of coordination across sectors to set clear guidelines, monitor progress, and leverage the capacity of the private sector for service delivery. The country panel illustrated the usefulness of HHAFT findings to highlight areas for improvement in national hand hygiene plans. Ms. Ann Thomas (UNICEF) closed the event by expressing her excitement on the growing level of government commitments, emphasizing the need for accountability and hand hygiene policy to accelerate progress.

The event included several inspirational videos, highlighting the importance of individual action. This year's Global Handwashing Day theme, "Clean Hands are Within Reach," requires everyone to play a role in achieving hand hygiene targets. The event reached over 1,500 people and the summary can be found [here](#).



National-Level Advocacy

Tracking national-level efforts is a critical component of the Global Handwashing Partnership's strategy.

In 2023, the Global Handwashing Partnership collected 18 new commitments from governments, private sector, NGOs, and other institutions. Commitments ranged from developing national campaigns to creating hand hygiene policies in various institutions. These commitments have been recorded and will be tracked by the Partnership in the coming years.

In addition to these commitments, the Global Handwashing Partnership supported the ongoing process to develop a hand hygiene roadmap in Zambia and disseminated a new hand hygiene roadmap developed by the Government of Tajikistan. These roadmaps were initiated through

a global call to action set forth by the Hand Hygiene for All Initiative, in which the Global Handwashing Partnership is a core partner (more information on this initiative on Page 20). All published roadmaps are available on the Global Handwashing Partnership website [here](#).

Hand Hygiene Acceleration Framework Tool (HHAFT)

To further track hand hygiene progress at a country level, the Global Handwashing Partnership supported the development and dissemination of the [Hand Hygiene Acceleration Framework Tool \(HHAFT\)](#), which was first launched in 2022. The tool tracks the process that a government is going through to develop and implement a plan of action for hand

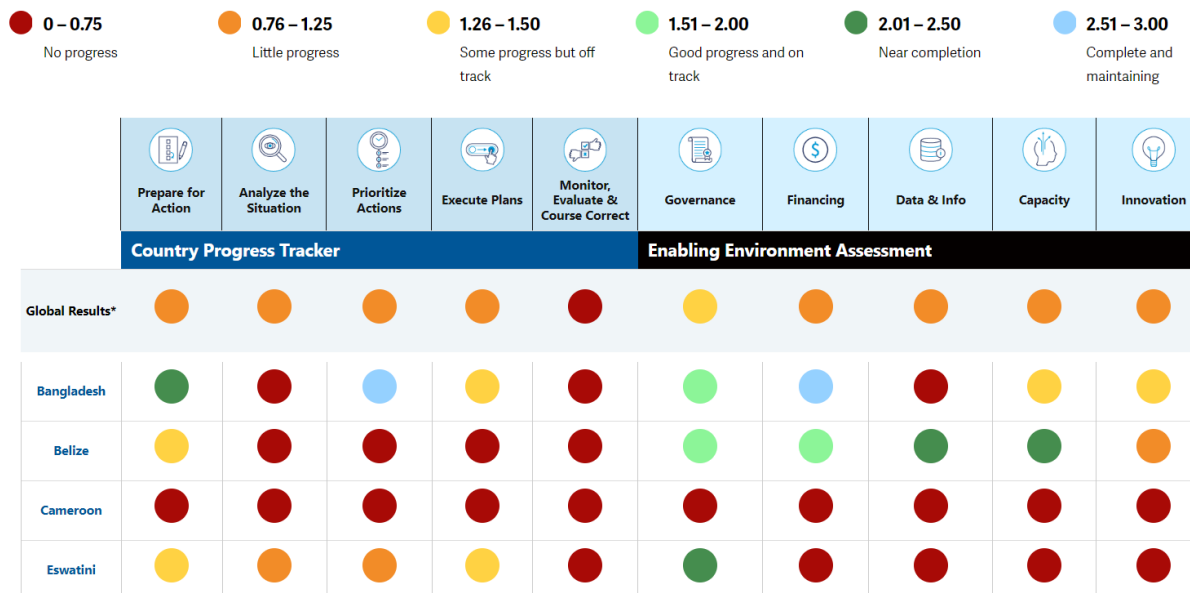
hygiene improvement and assesses the quality of that plan. Since the HHAFT's launch, 17 countries have completed the tool.

In 2023, the Global Handwashing Partnership led the development of a global dashboard to visualize HHAFT findings. The first iteration of the dashboard was launched as part of the UN Water

Conference and a subsequent update was finalized in time for Global Handwashing Day 2023. The dashboard includes global-level findings and country-specific pages with further analysis and documentation for each country that has filled out the tool thus far. The dashboard is available on the Hand Hygiene for All website [here](#).

HHAFT RESULTS

HHAFT results are included in the table below, showcasing both global and country-level results.



Integrated Advocacy

Hand hygiene has cross-cutting benefits across multiple sectors. Beyond its tie to the water, sanitation and hygiene sector, hand hygiene is a factor across health, nutrition, education, and early childhood development.

The Global Handwashing Partnership participates in broader sector alliances and partnerships to ensure hand hygiene is a priority within these forums. A list of current affiliations is included below:

- CORE Group
- Frontline Health Workers Coalition
- Global WASH Cluster
- NTD NGO Network
- Sanitation and Water for All
- SuSanA
- WASH in Health Care Facilities Community of Practice
- WASH in Schools Network



Photo Credit: Global Water 2020

Knowledge Management Highlights

Research Hub

The Global Handwashing Partnership serves as a knowledge hub, maintaining a searchable resource hub on our website with the latest research and success stories for handwashing.

New Resources and Materials

As part of its commitment, the Global Handwashing Partnership not only amplifies existing resources through its resource hub but creates new resources that fill current knowledge gaps in hand hygiene.

Knowledge Exchange Events

The Global Handwashing Partnership convenes knowledge exchange events to provide a platform for learning and discussion among its network.

Resource Hub

The Global Handwashing Partnership maintains a resource hub on its website. This resource hub serves as a central repository of hand hygiene-related resources and is updated on a regular basis. Resources are tagged by content and topic.

In 2023, the Global Handwashing Partnership resource hub garnered over 30,000 page views. Resources published in 2023 include Global Handwashing Day resources, additions to the Handwashing Stations Database, and more general hand hygiene resources.

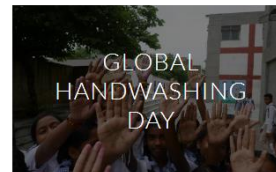
Explore the Resource Hub [here](#).

Search

Content All Content ▼ Topic All Topics ▼ Audience All Audiences ▼

Language All Languages ▼ Publication Year All Publication Years ▼

SUBMIT Reset



New Resources and Materials

As part of its knowledge management activities, the Global Handwashing Partnership not only amplifies partner resources but also develops new resources and materials as part of its resource hub. Highlighted new resources are included in the sections below.

Think Tank Report

In early 2023, the Global Handwashing Partnership published the 2022 Think Tank Report. Hand Hygiene Think Tanks seek to address key questions within the sector and bring forth new ideas to move the dial on hand hygiene.

The 2022 Hand Hygiene Think Tank was aligned with the WHO/UNICEF global guidelines process (more information on this process on Page 21) and aimed to map out key stakeholders at the global,

regional, national, and local levels, and define roles across sectors and different levels of implementation for the forthcoming guidelines.

The findings from this report serve as a foundation for end-user consultations convened by WHO and UNICEF throughout 2023. The Think Tank report is available [here](#).

Hand Hygiene Research Summary

Every year, the Global Handwashing Partnership compiles and synthesizes peer-reviewed research from the previous year (2022) to create its annual hand hygiene research summary. The aim of this summary is to highlight key themes in hand hygiene research and identify potential needs for further research.

The 2022 Hand Hygiene Research Summary includes the following sections:

- Hand Hygiene Impacts
- Hand Hygiene Access and Supplies
- Determinants and Interventions for Hand Hygiene Behavior Change in Various Settings

A breakdown of the types of studies addressed by the summary is shown to the right. Key findings and recommendations from the 2022 Hand Hygiene Research Summary include new findings around hand hygiene behavior change and handwashing alternatives (i.e., alcohol-based handrub) as well as the need to conduct further research on non-health outcomes for hand hygiene.

The 2022 Hand Hygiene Research Summary was developed in consultation with Dan Campbell (Independent Consultant/WASH Knowledge Management Expert) and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. View the full research summary [here](#).

Setting	Number	Percentage
Domestic	30	20%
Healthcare Facility	52	34%
Educational	16	11%
Public Space	10	7%
Workplace	7	5%
Humanitarian	3	2%
Undefined	34	22%
Outcome Focus		
COVID related	49	32%
Non-COVID related	103	68%
Study Design		
Cross-sectional	21	14%
Literature Review	7	4%
Cohort	24	16%
Case-control study	9	5%
Formative	27	16%
Microbiological	24	15%
Randomized controlled trial	14	9%
Policy Analysis	15	10%
Not defined	11	7%

Knowledge Exchange Events

The Global Handwashing Partnership hosts various knowledge exchange events, ranging from internal partner meetings to technical webinars to conference side events.

In 2023, the Global Handwashing Partnership partnered with USAID and Quicksand to host a technical webinar focused on the use of human-centered design and AI systems to change hand hygiene behavior in health care facilities.

The webinar featured a presentation from the QuickSand team and open discussion on the ramifications of AI systems for behavior change, including a discussion on current ethics for use of AI technology. This webinar serves as a foundation for future webinars and discussions around this topic as more becomes understood around AI. The full webinar summary is available [here](#).



Photo Credit: Quicksand

Coordination Highlights

Hand Hygiene for All Initiative

The Global Handwashing Partnership serves as a liaison between its partners and the [Hand Hygiene for All Initiative](#). Led by WHO and UNICEF, the initiative seeks to mainstream hand hygiene as a public health intervention and works with national governments to develop national roadmaps for hand hygiene progress.

Partner Meetings

The Global Handwashing Partnership hosts quarterly partner meetings. These meetings serve not only as a space for networking but also diving into technical discussions among the partnership.

Conferences and Events

The Global Handwashing Partnership coordinates with its partners to propose and design hand hygiene side sessions at conferences and events to amplify hand hygiene messages.

Hand Hygiene for All Initiative

Since 2020, the Global Handwashing Partnership has served as a core partner of the [Hand Hygiene for All Initiative \(HH4A\)](#), which is led by UNICEF and WHO.

Created in response to COVID-19, the initiative serves as a catalyst for a coordinated push to improve national and global hand hygiene action. The initiative has made strong progress toward its vision with improved hand hygiene policies in place among 60+ countries, global research priorities identified, and coordination structures strengthened.

In 2023, the Global Handwashing Partnership supported key activities for the initiative, including continuing its leadership role for the the initiative's advocacy and communications working group, supporting the ongoing process for forthcoming guidelines on hand hygiene in community settings, and further dissemination

of the HHAFT (more information on the HHAFT on Page 11).

Hand Hygiene Advocacy and Communications Working Group

The Hand Hygiene Advocacy and Communications Working Group plays a critical role in advancing the hand hygiene agenda by galvanizing commitments and action by decision makers and influencers across constituencies (governments, private sector, and civil society) and delivering strong and impactful advocacy and communications. As the group lead, the Global Handwashing Partnership coordinates with HH4A core partners to share consistent hand hygiene messages throughout the year and deliver key outputs aligned with the initiative's work plan.

Global Guidelines on Hand Hygiene in Community Settings

Historic neglect coupled with the recent surge in hand hygiene interest identified a need to develop normative guidelines for hand hygiene in community settings. Under its mandate to address demand for guidance on areas of public health, the WHO is leading the development of global guidelines in collaboration with UNICEF. These guidelines will provide evidence-based recommendations to governments on how to improve hand hygiene in community settings, focusing on rapid measures that can be implemented to address hand hygiene.

To support this process, the Global Handwashing Partnership participated in and facilitated various end-user consultations, including the 2022 Hand Hygiene Think Tank, followed by a kickoff government workshop hosted in The Hague (May 2023) as well as

several conference side events focused on the guidelines process.

Outputs from these end-user consultations include the 2022 Hand Hygiene Think Tank Report (more information on this report on Page 16) and a commentary published in BMJ Global Health with consensus points from the kickoff workshop hosted in May. The commentary can be found [here](#).



Photo Credit: World Health Organization

Partner Meetings

Partner meetings serve as a key component for overall partnership coordination. These meetings are designed to not only provide a space for partner networking but also to gather partner insights on key priorities.

In 2023, the Global Handwashing Partnership hosted quarterly partner meetings, each with a different thematic priority. Partner meeting topics were as follows:

- **April 2023:** UN Water Conference takeaways
- **July 2023:** Hand Hygiene in Health Care Facilities
- **September 2023:** Preparation for Global Handwashing Day
- **December 2023:** Summary of Partnership activities from 2023 and discussion of 2024 priorities



Key Events and Conferences

Events and conferences are key moments to spread advocacy messages and share learnings. This section describes major events and conferences that the Global Handwashing Partnership participated in for the year.

UN Water Conference

The 2023 UN Water Conference was co-hosted by the Governments of Tajikistan and the Netherlands and sought to bring successful solutions to a global scale through a [Water Action Agenda](#).

Side events were hosted within UN Head Quarters (UNHQ) and outside UNHQ through New York Water Week. In total, there were approximately **175** side events held inside UNHQ and **several hundreds** of events held outside of headquarters for participants to join. While the Global Handwashing Partnership did not host its own

side event during the conference, the partnership contributed to the Water for Health interactive dialogue and submitted a commitment through the Water Action Agenda.

IRC All Systems Connect

All Systems Connect was convened by IRC and served as a unifying platform for systems leaders to gather and discuss water, sanitation and hygiene, health, climate, economic development and social justice through a systems lens. There were three core themes of the conference:

- **Systems leadership** to drive collective action
- **Connecting across silos and sectors** to find better ways to address shared system challenges
- **Acting for change** to commit to accelerating progress

The Global Handwashing Partnership co-convened two side events during IRC All Systems Connect. The first event focused on the use of campaigns, such as Global Handwashing Day, to drive systems change, while the second event focused on the hand hygiene system and the roles and responsibilities within a hygiene systems framework.

UNC Water & Health Conference

The UNC Water & Health Conference explored the latest learnings around WASH, with sessions focused on new and emerging practices.

The Global Handwashing Partnership co-convened two side events at the 2023 UNC Water & Health Conference. The first event explored hygiene systems for health, with the aim to better understand how roles and responsibilities affect the enabling environment across settings. The second event focused on sustaining hygiene behavior beyond public health emergencies.

In addition to the two side events, the Global Handwashing Partnership also hosted a partner dinner, providing an informal networking opportunity for partners attending the conference.

AfricaSan Conference

The AfricaSan Conference was initiated to provide a platform for technical and political dialogue among governments and stakeholders in the Africa region.

The Global Handwashing Partnership co-convened two side events at the 2023 AfricaSan Conference. The first event focused on developing strong hygiene systems in Africa, presenting regional findings from the HHAFT (see Page 11 for more details). The event identified different areas to accelerate progress across countries in the region. The second event focused on sustaining hygiene behavior beyond public health emergencies and presented case studies from Mozambique and Ethiopia.



PARTNER SPOTLIGHTS

Photo Credit: Wellbeing Foundation

Essity

Essity is committed to being a key advocate for good hand hygiene. In 2023, Essity focused their efforts on promoting hand hygiene in health care and school settings. During the 2023 World Hand Hygiene Day campaign, Essity supported the need for training in new ways, using their virtual reality training module to train nurses and other health practitioners in proper hand hygiene techniques. They also joined together with the United Nations Foundation to host a roundtable event in Geneva focused on the global challenge of healthcare-associated infections and antimicrobial resistance.

Essity also celebrated the 10-year anniversary of their [Ella Handwashing Adventure App](#), which offers a range of playful materials to support pre-school and kindergarten teachers and staff in addressing handwashing for small children. The app features a cartoon character named “Ella” and offers guides to help kids play and learn new skills.

For Global Handwashing Day 2023, Essity focused their messaging on the importance of using soap AND drying hands to minimize the spread of bacteria and shared the importance of using sustainable products for handwashing. More on Essity’s Global Handwashing Day efforts can be found [here](#).



FHI 360

FHI 360 hosts the Global Handwashing Partnership Secretariat and serves a leading role in the partnership's overall coordination and activities. As secretariat host, FHI 360 lends its expertise to broader hand hygiene advocacy and knowledge management priorities. Beyond its role as secretariat host, FHI 360 addresses hand hygiene through many of its projects.

At a global level, FHI 360 supports several USAID programs. Through [the **Global Waters Communication and Knowledge Management II Project**](#), FHI 360 supports global communications for USAID Water, including support for www.globalwaters.org, one of USAID's knowledge-sharing hubs for thought leadership. Through the [Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Partnerships and Learning for Sustainability #2 project \(USAID/WASHPaLS #2\)](#), FHI 360 leads implementation research on key hygiene interventions in Malawi and Ethiopia.

At a country level, FHI 360 implements WASH programming, which often includes development of handwashing infrastructure, trainings, and dissemination of hand hygiene promotional materials. In Yemen, FHI 360 led hand hygiene and IPC trainings for health care workers and played promotional content on TVs in healthcare facility waiting rooms as an innovative behavior change approach.





On Global Handwashing Day 2023, the SATO Tap was launched in two new markets: Kenya and Nigeria. These key markets in Africa ensures clean hands are within reach of consumers across both countries. According to UNICEF, only 16% of Nigerians and 25% of Kenyans have access to basic handwashing facilities at home, leaving families and communities at risk of many infectious diseases. With an estimated 36 million households in Nigeria - and 9 million in Kenya - without access to handwashing, LIXIL believes that the award-winning SATO Tap can help unlock significant health, social and economic value for consumers in these countries.

Beyond the distribution of the SATO Tap, LIXIL also promotes hand hygiene access through social marketing, engaging with local influencers to promote hand hygiene to target audiences beyond SATO's own social media reach. To learn more about their social marketing efforts, read this post [here](#).



Unilever

Unilever spearheaded several hand hygiene initiatives with significant developments in their partnerships in India and Indonesia. In India, Unilever concluded its successful partnership with Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, with a landmark meeting with the Principal Secretary of Health and Family Welfare, who showed keen interest in integrating hand hygiene components and tools into their health initiatives.

In Indonesia, Unilever launched their partnership with Gavi and Power of Nutrition. They launched Keluarga SIGAP, a significant 5-year program supported by the Indonesian government. This initiative aims to improve the outcomes of 1 million children under 5 and address the high rates of diarrheal diseases and pneumonia through integrated interventions including handwashing with soap, good nutrition, and vaccination. This program builds on the success of similar initiatives in rural India and is a continuation of the company's commitment to promoting health and hygiene.



A photograph of three young boys in school uniforms (light brown shirts and dark brown trousers) standing outdoors. They are all smiling and have white soap suds on their hands, indicating they are washing them. The boy on the left is looking down at his hands, the middle boy is looking towards the camera, and the boy on the right is looking down at his hands. The background shows a blurred outdoor setting with trees and a building.

WAY FORWARD

A Collective Way Forward

This year reminds us of how much progress has been made, from innovative hand hygiene products to the development of country-led hand hygiene roadmaps. This milestone also serves as a reminder of how much more needs to be done to ensure universal hand hygiene by 2030.

The Global Handwashing Partnership will continue our commitment to serve as a prominent global actor for hand hygiene advocacy and serve as a knowledge hub for hand hygiene actors around the world. Beyond these roles, the strength of the Global Handwashing Partnership has always been in its collective network. As we work toward a joint vision of hand hygiene for all, we must recognize and leverage the power of the whole of society.

To learn more about the partnership's activities and priorities, visit the [Global Handwashing Partnership website](https://www.globalhandwashing.org/). To learn how to get involved, please e-mail the Secretariat team at **contact@globalhandwashing.org**.



Photo Credit: Danny Forest



Steering Committee and Strategic Partners



Members



Affiliates

Action Against Hunger
Banka Bioloo
CAWST
Clean the World Foundation
DefeatDD
DevWorks International

EcoSoap Bank
Gobie Clean
Handzies
HappyTap
Icddr,b
International Aid
IRC WASH

Manila Water Foundation
Medentech
MSR Global Health
PHAAE
Real Relief
Soapbox Collaborative
Smixin

Soapen
SPATAP
Splash
United Purpose
Vaccine Ambassadors
Wellbeing Foundation

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