School Hand Washing Promotion Programme

For Watsan and Hand Washing Promotion Practitioners
## Table of Contents

### SECTION 1

Pre Programme: Set up & Logistics

A. Why is this programme necessary?
B. School Hand Washing Programme Sample Introduction Letter
C. School Hand Washing Programme Preparation Checklist

### SECTION 2

School Programme: Promoting Hand Washing with Soap

A. Introduction
B. Why do we wash our hands with soap?
C. When do we wash our hands soap?
D. How do we wash our hands with soap?
E. Tippy Tap Demonstration and Competition
F. Health Minister Election
G. Closeout
H. Pack up

### SECTION 3

Post Programme: Sustaining Impact
Section 1
Pre Programme
Set up & Logistics

Overview
This section reviews why this programme is important and gives resources to aid in set up of the event.

A. Why a school programme to promote hand washing with soap?

Millions of children die globally every year from preventable diseases such as diarrhoea and acute respiratory infection. Hand washing with soap is the most effective and inexpensive way to reduce these deaths. The behaviour is simple and yet it is rarely practiced and difficult to promote.

While there are other hygiene behaviours that also impact health, it has been shown the most effective messages need to be simple and singular. For example, conveying two messages in a single communication reduces the effectiveness of each by half. Thus, promoting programs that cover a wide range of hygiene related behaviours often results in little behaviour change. This is a programme that focuses on a main message of hand washing with soap before eating and after using the toilet using a tippy tap.

This programme targets children specifically. Children often communicate and share more than adults, and in some cases are more literate than their parents. In addition, many children are responsible for younger siblings while their parents work. Many programs worldwide have shown that children can be effective agents of change in the areas of health and hygiene.

This school programme aims to take hand washing with soap as an abstract good idea and transform it into an automatic behaviour in school children. They can then become agents of change in their communities as they take this message home.

This manual illustrates a method to promote hand washing with soap with school children in Grades 1 to 7. It is geared towards watsan and hygiene promotion practitioners. The programme can be performed by a hand washing team (HWT) of 4 members.
Dear (Insert School Principal Name here):

Hand washing with soap has been proven to save lives and increase health in children. Kids who are healthy will have fewer school absences and are more attentive in class.

While hand washing is a simple action, it is difficult to promote this behaviour. It has been our experience that one of the most effective ways to promote it community wide has been to target children.

Along with your school staff, our hand washing promotion team will hold a 2 hour school hand washing promotion event. The event will focus on engaging the children in a fun and educational manner so that they understand why, when and how to wash hands. A tippy tap (a simple, water conserving hand washing device) will be installed and demonstrated and the children will then have an opportunity to build one themselves. The goal of this program is to introduce the tippy tap and make hand washing fun for the children so that they practice it more often. We also hope to be able to follow up on this program with brief future visits which we will coordinate with you to ensure that we do not disrupt the regular school schedule.

Our team will review the logistics of this program with you during our set up visit. If you have any questions please contact XXXX at XXXXX.

Thank you for this opportunity. We look forward to working with you to ensure the health of one of our most precious resources – our children.

Regards,

XXXX
Handwashing Team Lead
C. School Hand washing Programme Preparation Checklist

1. Call village leaders/school officials and explain programme and fix date.

2. Visit school and determine/confirm following with school staff:
   a. Programme purpose and schedule
   b. Date of programme
   c. Number of children?
   d. Location of permanent tippy tap (place near the school latrines if they exist)
   e. Location of competition tippy taps
   f. Explain hole digging requirements. Base number of tippy taps on group size (each competition group should be 15 to 20). Holes should be 70 cm deep and about 80 cm apart.
   g. School should try to have holes dug prior to programme start
   h. Can school provide gravel ? (HWT can bring this but this is typically a heavy item to transport)
   i. Is there a place where both children and HWT will be in the shade?
   j. School staff should not give answers or overcorrect the children
   k. Requiring judges from the school staff
   l. Parents initiation

3. Things to bring:
   a. Tippy tap kits (number based on groups + one for permanent installation)
      i. Two y shaped sticks
      ii. Crossbar stick
      iii. Lever stick
      iv. 2 pieces of rope (they can be used to tie the sticks together). These should be pre cut (one for lever and one for soap).
      v. Soap
      vi. 5L container
   b. Gravel for soak pit for permanent tippy tap if school doesn’t provide it.
   c. Mug
   d. Bucket
   e. Container to measure water
   f. Waste basket
   g. Nail cutters – one for each group
   h. Water
      i. Either heated nail or some other way to make hole in container and soap.
   j. Scissors or blade to cut rope if required.
   k. Digging stick
   l. 2 Balls
   m. Glitter
   n. Food for skit
   o. Laminated tippy tap posters
**SECTION 2**  
**School Programme**  
**Promoting Hand Washing with Soap**

**Overview**  
This section gives detailed steps for each module of the programme at the school.

**A. Introduction**

- Introduce the HWT members.

Keep introductions short and interesting enough to engage the children. If the group size is small, spend a few minutes asking the children to introduce themselves. Being able to call on a few by name during the programme will keep the children engaged for longer.

**B. Why do we wash our hands with soap?**

**Purpose**

The purpose of this module is for students to really understand that:

- Germs make you sick.
- Hand washing gets rid of germs.
- Germs are easily spread.
- Washing hands with just water cannot get rid of germs.

**Activity: Germs make you sick and hand washing gets rid of germs**

Start the programme with a two-minute skit requiring two people. Person 1 is Ramu and he plays a small boy. Person 2 is Ma and plays his mother.

It is important to over act this to ensure that even the youngest child understands what is happening. For example, Spend enough time on the defecation act so that children a) know what you are doing and b) build an instant rapport with you since you are breaking a lot of barriers just to do this in front of them and c) engage them through laughter.

- **Ramu** is playing. He then goes and defecates.
- **Ma** calls Ramu for dinner.
- **Ramu** finishes defecating, washing himself quickly and then looks at his hands. **Ma** calls again and Ramu decides not to wash his hands and comes to eat dinner.
- **Ramu** eats while **Ma** lovingly feeds him. (opportunity to generate laughter.)
- **Ramu** finishes eating and then gets a stomach ache. He groans and Lots of groaning and stomach clutching while **Ma** looks on anxiously asking “what’s wrong?”
Questions to ask the children include:

- What happened in the skit?
- Why did Ramu get sick?
- What could he have done to prevent getting sick?

It is important to let the children answer these questions. Often the adults (principal, teachers, parents, and even new HWT team members want to give the children the answers. It is permissible to lead the children but be patient and let them to come up with the answers. This will ensure that the children are coming up with the learnings rather than memorizing the answers.

Ask questions until the children come up with the following:

- Identify that germs from feces on Raju’s hands made him sick.
- He ate these germs and they made his stomach hurt.
- He could have prevented this by hand washing after defecation and before eating. (Even if they don’t say soap at this point, it is ok).

**Activity: Germs are easily spread**

Once the children have identified germs, ask them if they can see germs. They will answer no (if they say yes, take this time to explain that germs are too small to see). Tell them that today is a special day – it is a day when we can see germs.

Since germs cannot be seen, germ transfer is often an abstract concept, especially for children. To help make this easier to understand play with a Glitterball, a plastic ball that is coated in petroleum jelly and then glitter. It is best if the children do not see the ball till this activity.

Sneeze or pick your nose. Then pick up the glitterball and toss it around with team members, the children and the adults. For shy adults, go over with glitter on your hand and shake their hands. In this way, the glitter (germs) will be transferred to the entire group is a matter of minutes. At this point, a HWT member should announce that they are hungry, pick up a roti or toast or easily transportable item to eat and then get a stomach ache.

*Below: photo strip demonstrating Glitterball activity.*
Sample questions for the children:

- Why did the team member get sick?
- Where did the germs come from?
- What could we have done to prevent the team member from getting sick?

Ask questions till the children:

- Trace the path of the germs from the sneeze all through the crowd to the team member to the food to the stomach.
- Identify that it is not a good idea to sneeze on your hands (into your elbow is a better place).
- Understand that germs can be transferred really easily.

**Activity: Washing hands with just water cannot get rid of germs**

Ask the children:

- How to get rid of the germs?

Continue the skit:

- Wash hands with a mug and bucket of water and show that it does not remove the germs (glitter).
- Illustrate how the water in the bucket now has germs (glitter) from your hands.
- Wash your hands with water and soap and show how the germs are gone. If you are using a mug and bucket, be sure to show how the germs are now in the bucket, on the mug hand and try to measure how much water you have used.

The glitter is similar to germs because it does not come off just by washing your hands with water -- soap must be used. This really emphasizes that hands must be washed with soap.
C. When do we wash our hands with soap?

**Purpose**

For students to really understand that hands must be washed:

- Before eating
- After going to the toilet
- Before cooking
- After handling a baby’s feces

**Activity**

All four points will be covered in a short skit requiring 4 presenters.

Four HWT members should act out the 4 situations as listed below. Do this one at a time.

Again, exaggerate each action and ensure you perform it for enough time that the children understand it.

Questions for the children:

- What was each person doing? Once the children respond correctly, you may have each presenter hold a sketch of the activity to remind the children once the skit is over.
- Which one of the 4 should wash their hands? Have them do a show of hands voting for each actor.
- Lead the children till they realize that all four presenters need to wash their hands.
- When should each presenter wash their hands?
- Again have the children vote till they arrive at the right answers.

Close out this segment by calling on children to state a quick summary of when one should wash one’s hands.
D. How do we wash our hands with soap?

**PURPOSE**

For children to learn to wash and dry their hands properly in a fun manner.

**ACTIVITY**

Studies have identified the areas on your hands that are most neglected during handwashing. To ensure the children remember to wash these parts, teach them a simple activity to perform while hand washing.

Each part of the hand that needs to be washed is associated with a simple action (such as “fighting”) or animal (such as “snake”). Kids have fun performing the routine and end up washing their hands quite thoroughly. This is especially important in areas where communities eat with their hands, without utensils.

Actions marked with an “*” are performed twice, once for each hand.
A HWT member should say and perform each action once and let the children repeat it and say it after him/her. It is important to have another member on hand to ensure the children are doing it correctly and can correct them afterwards. The main team member should say the action word loudly and clearly. Call on several children to come up individually and perform the action for the larger group.

Spend enough time on this activity to ensure that all the children can do it. Allow them to correct each other rather than correcting them yourself. This is an important piece of the school programme – it ensures that children are washing their hands thoroughly.

Below: School kids learning to wash their hands properly while having a giggle.

After washing, tell the kids to air dry their hands. Ask them why it is better to air dry rather than using a towel or their clothing. Singing a song while hands are air drying makes this process go by much faster. Create your own song with popular community melodies or use a song listed at http://www.tippytap.org/songs/
**E. Tippy Tap Demonstration and Competition**

**PURPOSE**

To ensure the kids understand:

- How to use a tippy tap
- The benefits of using it
- How to build a tippy tap

**ACTIVITY**

Gather the children around the pre-installed tippy tap. For more information on how to build a tippy tap, see [http://www.tippytap.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/How-to-build-a-tippy-tap-manual.pdf](http://www.tippytap.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/How-to-build-a-tippy-tap-manual.pdf) (or Call on a child to wash their hands using a mug and water over a container so you can determine the water they use. If they don’t use soap or don’t use the actions from the last part, and none of the group members remind them, then ask if the child has done it correctly. Have them rewash with soap and use the actions (after pouring the water out) if they did not do so the first time.

Then wash your hands with the tippy tap.

Ensure you use soap and the hand washing actions. Measure the water as well.

Questions for the children:

- Which uses less water?
- Which is more hygienic and why?
- Where does the waste water go?
- Is it easy to use?
- Which is more fun to use (mug or tippy tap)?

A student demonstrating the amount of water required to wash your hands in the traditional manner using a mug and bucket. A student demonstrating the tippy tap. Note the gravel soak pit below the tap and the “waste” water going to the plants behind the tap.
Call on an adult and a child to use the tippy tap. Encourage the children to all call out the hand washing actions with the demonstrator.

- What are important parts of the tippy tap?
- Is this easy to build?
- Could they do it?

Once the children seem confident that they can build a tippy tap, announce the competition.

Key points to review about the competition:
- Everyone in each group must participate.
- Encourage each group to come up with a name.
- The winner will not be the fastest group, but the one with the best tippy tap.
- Assign each group to have a HWT facilitator.
- Remind the teachers and adults not to help the children.
- If the children get stuck, they should review the existing tippy tap.
- Everyone in group must have their nails cut and their hands washed with the tippy tap before they are deemed to be finished.

Have everyone look at their hands and see where the visible dirt is. Remind them to focus on the nails and let them know visibly clean hands are also a part of the judging.

Start the competition. Ensure that each tippy tap kit is in a different location so that groups don’t take others’ materials.

Have each HWT facilitator ensure that the children are working in a harmonious manner and that everyone gets to participate in some manner. The facilitator can also cut nails and make the hole in the container to ensure that children are not working with sharp tools. He should also point out the importance of compaction when the children are putting the sticks in the holes. Lastly, he should check that each child in his group has short, clean nails and visibly clean hands.

It is important to remind the teachers, parents and HWT members (including the facilitator) to let the children figure out how to build the tippy tap. Encourage them to see the preinstalled tippy tap. And if they do something incorrectly, do not correct them immediately – they always eventually figure it out!

*Left: Children building a tippy tap during the competition.*
Above: Kids lining up to use their tippy tap before judging.

If any trash is left lying around such as soap wrappers, ask children to put them in the trash can provided. Once everyone is finished, ask the children to sit down. Appoint 2 or 3 judges from among the teachers or parents and explain what makes a good tippy tap. Ask all the children to look at their hands and see if they are cleaner. Then have the judges announce the winner and give reasons.
Give the winning group a round of applause and thank the judges.

You can choose to give the children prizes such as bars of soap. It is nice if everyone, not just the winning team, receives a prize.

Questions for the children:
- How do you build a tippy tap?
- What materials do you need? (ensure you talk about the gravel soak pit)
- Can you build one at home?
- Will you build one at home?
- Where at home will you build one?
- When will you build one?
- Can I come and see it?
- What are the benefits of using a tippy tap?

Try to build enthusiasm during the question asking (ie ask multiple times if necessary). End this segment by saying you will be back to visit their homes when they build a tippy tap.

For detailed information on how to build a tippy tap “How to Build a Tippy Tap”.

F. Health Minister Election

Purpose

Ensure that the kids elect health ministers amongst themselves:

- to ensure that the tippy tap has water and soap every day
- that everyone is washing their hands at appropriate times
- that everyone is using the actions while washing
- that everyone’s nails are clean and cut

Activity

Call on the teachers to assist with this segment if necessary. You will need to ensure that one health minister is elected for each day of the week.

Once 5 or 6 (depending on the school week) ministers are selected, call them up to the front. Ensure that each one can do the hand washing actions. Explain the responsibilities above. Ask them to promise to be a good minister.

Write down their names for each of the week on large poster paper to hang in the school.

Shake their hands and clap for each minister before sending them back to the group.
G. Closeout

Ask the children what they have learned today. Frame questions as required to get the major points of each section.

Sample questions include:
Why do we wash our hands?
When do we wash our hands?
How do we wash our hands?
Why is a tippy tap useful?
What will the health ministers do?

In closing, remember to say thank you to the school staff. Present principal with nail cutters and laminated tippy tap posters (one for each class ideally).

H. Packup

Take down all the competition tippy taps and reassemble kits. Only the permanent tippy tap will remain. Remind principal, teachers and other adults that they too should use the tippy tap – this is not just for children and it sets a good example for the children.

Remember if asked to stay for lunch or snacks, it is vital that all HWT members wash their hands with the tippy tap prior to eating, using the hand actions. At any rate, prior to leaving, all the HWT members should use the tippy tap in clear view of the children. At all follow up activities or at village visits by your organization staff, all team members MUST wash their hands with soap at appropriate times – this is a part of the messaging campaign.

Try to schedule some follow up visit dates. You can also send the follow up letter attached in the next section.
Section 3
Post Programme
Sustaining Impact

Overview
Regular follow up is one of the most important parts to ensure sustained behaviour change. This section covers some follow up ideas to keep these visits fun and educational.

Follow up
This is one of the most important parts of the programme to ensure long term change in hand washing behaviour. It is best if HWT member can visit the school twice a week for as long as possible.

Work with the teachers. Sometimes teachers may feel like you are checking up on them or feel responsible if the tippy tap is not used enough. It is important to foster a feeling of mutual benefit and team spirit with the teachers – you are all in this together. Making the follow up engaging and fun for the teacher as well is key as some of the activities are actually more work for the teacher.

During these visits, they can:

- Check on the tippy tap and make sure it is functioning well. Ensure that the soap pit is keeping the area clean and without mud.
- Check people's hands and nails
- Check on each health minister and see if they have been performing their responsibilities
- Ask children if they remember the hand actions
- Ask who has been the best hand washer and award them a small gift like a pencil or soap. Put this up on a big poster.
- Ask if anyone has built a tippy tap at home.
- Visit homes with tippy taps. Encourage parents and other family members at home to build the tippy tap.
- Play game to ensure the children remember the hand washing actions: Call 4 children up and announce a competition. Call out the action (eg ‘Fighting!’) and the last child to do the correction is eliminated. Teachers can also use this on a regular basis to ensure all the children know all the actions by heart.
  - Make a list of children who have built tippy taps and have the kids create a poster with their names.
  - Bring colouring sheets related to hand washing with pledges to wash their hands with soap and hold a colouring competition.
  - Encourage the teachers to build taps at home
  - See if the kids need more tippy taps at school and mobilize them to build their own.

Left: Tippy tap built by child at his home 2 days after a school program.
If budget allows, printing a few photos of children using the tippy tap and presenting these to the best health minister or ‘Best Tippytapper of the Month’ as prizes is a great way to keep children excited about use of the tap. Extending this to a school level and pitting local schools against each other also keeps teachers interested.

**Thank you/Follow letter template**

**Date**

Dear XXXX:

On behalf of the XXXX Hand Washing Team, I’d like to thank you for hosting the Hand washing Promotion Program at your school last week. We enjoyed working with your students and teachers to promote hand washing with soap. We are very appreciative of your cooperation and your obvious interest which allowed for the success of the program.

3.5 million children die from diarrhoea and acute respiratory illness every year around the world. Hand washing with soap can prevent 1.2 million of these. Given the high impact and low cost of this intervention and our belief that children are powerful agents of change, XXX is committed to school programs that increase hand washing with soap.

We will be contacting you in a few days to set up a follow up schedule.

Additionally, if you know of other schools that would benefit from our Hand washing Promotion Program, please do let us know. You can reach us at XXXXX

We look forward to working with you in the future. Thanks again to you and your staff for joining us in this important work.

Sincerely,

XXXXXXX