



Lifebuoy spreads hygiene message to millions of children in 23 countries on 15 October 2008 – the first ever global handwashing day

On 15 October 2008 Lifebuoy – the world’s largest health brand – partnered with the public sector and organisations across the world to campaign for improved hygiene practices and get millions of children in five continents to wash hands with soap through a series of high-impact, entertaining – and potentially life-saving – initiatives.

Lifebuoy is a co-founder of Global Handwashing Day and has united with other members of the Global Public Private Partnership for Handwashing (PPPHW) – including UNICEF; the World Bank; Procter and Gamble – to promote a single life-saving message: wash hands with soap.

Vindi Banga, Unilever’s President Foods & Home and Personal Care, says: “Every year, more than 3.5 million children do not live to reach their fifth birthday because of diarrhoea and pneumonia. Global Handwashing Day is a great opportunity to spread the word that handwashing with soap could cut deaths from diarrhoea by half, and deaths from acute respiratory infections such as pneumonia by a quarter.”

Handwashing with soap is the single most cost-effective way to prevent diarrheal-related deaths and disease. The scale of these preventable deaths is what has prompted organisations and governments in more than 70 countries worldwide to play their own part on Global Handwashing Day, educating and inspiring children in schools and communities to adopt a healthy hygiene habit.

Here’s a handful of ways the hygiene message was spread by Lifebuoy on the first ever Global Handwashing Day:

- In **INDIA**, Lifebuoy employees gave hand-hygiene training in government and under-privileged schools. Yuvraj Singh is one of Lifebuoy’s ambassadors for Global Handwashing Day and will be giving hygiene messages to children
- In **SRI LANKA**, one million children are being taught to help wash their hands with the correct technique with the help of Public Health Inspectors, UNICEF and Lifebuoy
- In **SOUTH AFRICA**, Lifebuoy has teamed up with DWAF (Department of Water Affairs) and a high profile “clean up” school rally is taking place
- In **SINGAPORE**, Lifebuoy has forged a relationship with the Health Promotion Board and the World Toilet Organisation to carry out widespread hygiene education in schools



Above: Global Handwashing Day Celebrations in Sri Lanka



Above: India cricketer, Yuvraj Singh, and 1500 Indian schoolchildren making handwash pledge

Below: Global Handwashing Day parade in Sierra Leone





- In **VIETNAM**, Lifebuoy has partnered with the World Bank and Ministry of Health to host a high-profile event for school children
- In **INDONESIA**, a mass public event hosted by Lifebuoy with ministers of health and education will get thousands of school children to take handwashing pledges that could save their lives
- In **PAKISTAN**, Lifebuoy joined partners such as USAID and the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund to carry out educational activity in 3,500 schools
- In **MALAYSIA**, the Lifebuoy team will be using the whole month to promote the handwashing habit
- In **BANGLADESH**, Lifebuoy has partnered with the government to celebrate Global Handwashing Day later this week to reach 100,000 schools – reaching a potential 16 million children
- The handwashing message was spread through Unilever Head Offices of the **UK, US and NETHERLANDS**, where employees took the handwashing message home to their families using specially-prepared materials such as educative storybooks and handwashing demos

Further Information

- www.globalhandwashingday.org
- [Global Handwashing Day Planners Guide](#)
- [About the Lifebuoy Brand](#)

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Below: The Global Handwashing Day record breaking handwash in Indonesia

Above: Unilever Chairman, Patrick Cescau, taking a 'glow-germ' test at Unilever Corporate Centre in London





About the Lifebuoy brand

Lifebuoy has championed a message of health through hygiene consistently through a history that stretches back over 110 years. This message is more important than ever in many developing countries, where millions of lives can be saved simply by hand washing.

Lifebuoy is one of Unilever's oldest brands; launched in the UK in 1894 as the first affordable soap, supporting people in their quest for better personal hygiene. Today, Lifebuoy is mainly sold in Asia and parts of Africa – in fact, it is the market leader in every Asian market where it is sold. Nearly half of Lifebuoy brand's consumption is in rural Asia, where most of the population live on less than US\$1 per day and hygiene issues like hand washing are vital to the health of the population.

Lifebuoy's vision is to make five billion people in the world feel safer and more secure by meeting fundamental health and hygiene needs. Partnerships play a central role in delivering this vision. Working with organisations like the World Bank and UNICEF helps Lifebuoy to reach into new markets and change the behaviour of billions of consumers through joint initiatives promoting handwashing with soap.

For Lifebuoy, the partnership activities go to the very heart of the brand's ambitions and are, in every sense, vitality in action. These programmes bring benefits to everyone involved: they support the brand's growth plans, enable Lifebuoy's partners to achieve their public health goals, and help people throughout the developing world to live with greater freedom from health problems.

Unilever Values

Unilever's mission is to add vitality to life. We meet everyday needs for nutrition, hygiene, and personal care with brands that help people feel good, look good and get more out of life.

As a multi-local multinational, Unilever aims to play its part in addressing global environmental and social concerns through its own actions, and working in partnership with stakeholders at local, national and international levels.

Further Information

Visit www.unilever.com for more details about Unilever's corporate strategy and Vitality mission.
