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Over 900 PPAF schools participate in hand washing day

By our correspondent

ISLAMABAD: More than 60,000 school children in 900 schools and government-run educational facilities supported and adopted by Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) celebrated the first-ever Global Hand Washing Day aimed at reinforcing the United Nations' call for improved hygiene practices among schools across the country on Wednesday.

As part of the national campaign, ceremonies were held at various PPAF-supported/adopted schools located in the districts of Rahim Yar Khan, Khairpur, Shahdadpur, Kasur, Narowal, Bannu, Mansehra, Bhakkar and Mianwali.

According to the PPAF, the core idea behind celebrating the Global Hand Washing Day is to (i) promote hand washing among children and involve them as active participants with real project responsibilities rather than as passive targets of health messages and (ii) inculcate the idea of hand washing and its health benefits. The Global Hand Washing Day is centerpiece of a week of activities that will mobilise millions of people in more than 20 countries across the five continents to wash their hands with soap.

The guiding vision of Global Hand Washing Day is a local and global culture of hand washing with soap. Washing hands with soap after using the toilet or cleaning a child and before handling food can reduce rates of diarrheal disease by nearly one-half and rates of respiratory infection by about one-quarter. Hand washing can also prevent skin and eye infections, intestinal worms, SARS and Avian Flu and benefits the health of people living with HIV/AIDS.

Thousands of students observe the day

Our correspondent
Islamabad

More than 60,000 schoolchildren in 900 Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF)'s supported and adopted schools and government-run educational facilities celebrated the first-ever Global Handwashing Day aimed at reinforcing the United Nations' call for improved hygiene practices among school across Pakistan on Wednesday.

Lifebuoy has also joined hands with USAID, Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF), and other partner organisations like WFP, ITA, TCF, Care-n-Cure, LRBT and MALC to celebrate the day.

Lifebuoy aims to get as many as 500,000 children to wash their hands with soup and educate them about the importance of handwashing in fun, interactive way.

As a part of the national campaign, simple but impressive ceremonies were held at various PPAF-supported/adopted schools located in the districts of Rahim Yar Khan, Khairpur, Shahdadpur, Kasur, Narowal, Bannu, Mansehra, Bhakkar and Mianwali.

The core idea behind celebrating the Global Handwashing Day is to promote handwashing among children and involve them as active participants with real project responsibilities rather than as passive targets of health messages and inculcate the idea of handwashing and its health benefits.

The Global Handwashing Day is a centrepiece of a week of activities that will mobilize millions of people in more than 20 countries across the five continents to wash their hands with soap.

The guiding vision of Global Handwashing Day is a local and global culture of handwashing with soap. Hands are the principal carriers of disease-causing germs, and handwashing with soap could avert one million of those deaths. Washing hands with soap after using the toilet or cleaning a child and before handling food can reduce rates of diarrhoeal disease by nearly one-half and rates of respiratory infection by about one-quarter. Handwashing can also prevent skin and eye infections, intestinal worms, SARS and Avian Flu and benefits the health of people living with HIV/AIDS.

Of the approximately 120 million children born in the developing world each year, half will live in households without access to improved sanitation, at grave risk to their survival and development. Poor hygiene and lack of access to sanitation together contribute to about 88 per cent of deaths from diarrhoeal diseases, accounting for 1.5 million diarrhoea-related under-five deaths each year. Children suffer disproportionately from diarrhoeal and respiratory diseases and deaths. But research shows that children — the segment of society so often the most energetic, enthusiastic, and open to new ideas — can also be powerful agents of behavioural change.

Diarrhoeal diseases and pneumonia together kill almost 4 million children under the age of five in developing countries each year. Children from the poorest 20 per cent of households are more than 10 times as likely to die as children from the richest 20 per cent of households.