

GOODWILL MESSAGE, 2014 GLOBAL HANDWASHING DAY IN THE STATE OF OSUN

BY

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PROTOCOL.

It is my great pleasure and privilege to deliver this good will message on this very important occasion of the 2014 Global Hand Washing Campaign in the state of Osun. I am particularly pleased that this campaign is being driven by the First Lady, CLTS Ambassador, State of Osun, Sherifat Abidemi Aregbesola, the Deputy Governor, the SA to the Governor on WRRDCA,

Distinguished, Ladies and Gentlemen, pleased allow me to sustain the existing protocol.

As you may all be aware, this day was declared by the United Nations General Assembly as the Global hand washing day with the primary objective of mobilizing both political and financial support for accelerating progress on sanitation development.

Here in Nigeria, the Hand Washing Campaign is one of three targets outlined in the Action Plan developed by stakeholders for commemoration of the 2008 International Year of Sanitation (IYS). The two other targets are creating enabling environments to sustainably expand sanitation and hygiene Programmes and construction of one million latrines.

This year GHW is coming at the right time when Ebola Virus had been experienced in the country and there is greater need to prevent its re-occurrence. There are a lot of scientific evidences showing the significance of hand washing at critical moments to reduction in diarrhea which is the second leading cause of death amongst Nigerian Children (after malaria). The most recent study indicates that hand washing can reduce diarrhea episodes by about 47% .

The diarrhea prevalence rate in Nigeria is 18.8% and is one of the worst in sub-Sahara Africa and above the average of 16%. Diarrhea accounts for over 16% of child deaths in Nigeria and an estimated 194,000 deaths mainly amongst children under five occur annually due to this disease mainly caused by poor sanitation and hygiene practices.

Diarrhea is also closely linked to mal-nutrition, a condition that is associated with more than half of all under-five deaths. Undernourished children, in turn, have compromised immune systems and at higher risk for developing pneumonia – which also contribute to high children mortality in the country. This chain reaction illustrates that good hygiene practices such as hand washing are critical for child survival and development.

Several studies have also indicated that hand washing with soap may also have as much as 40% reduction in Acute Respiratory Infections (ARI) amongst children. ARI and diarrhea are the two

leading killers of children world wide and this shows that hand washing with soap is by far the most cost effective intervention for the reduction of child mortality and morbidity.

As Avian Human Influenza becomes an ever greater risk in the country, this campaign will also provide us opportunity to once again reinforce the importance of hand washing with soap to reduce the risk of spread of this disease.

Recognizing the importance of hygiene promotion especially hand washing to the overall child survival and development, UNICEF has been partnering with governments and private sector in the promotion of hand washing campaigns at State, LGA and Community levels including in schools since 2005. In collaboration with EU, Unilever Nigeria Plc and government partners, Hygiene Promotion projects are being implemented in 222 schools in all the 36 States and FCT and as part of the project, hand washing campaigns have been launched in 200 schools and communities in 30 States sensitizing over 2.5 million people on the importance of hand washing.

OSUN STATE STATUS

In the State of Osun, 74.6% of the population have access to improved water supply against the 59% of the National access. There is still need to supply potable water for the 25.4% that is remaining so that all in the state would have access to potable water.

In sanitation, 59% of the people living in the state of Osun have access to improved sanitation facilities against the 51% of the National access. Only 1.8% do not have access to improved sanitation in the state. However, 39.2% of the people in the state of Osun still defecate in the Open. This is a big value and these ones have the potential to get all the remaining population infected with communicable diseases. So there is need for all to imbibe the culture of hand washing, the do-it-yourself Vaccine, so as to prevent yourself from been infected by yourself.

Diarrhoea Kill 194,000 children under 5 in Nigeria every year, about 531 daily or better put, 22 children hourly. This is a National Disaster if we would agree and there is need for policy maker to act precisely and decisively. Sanitation should be an integra part of our budgets to as to reduce this scourge.

WSSSRP-II programme has been designed to increase the percentage of people having access to improve water and sanitation in Osun State in Ayedaade and Odo-Otin LGAs to 80% and if possible 100% by the year 2017. But Like I said the state government needs to act decisively by contributing their Quick Win Led Fund so as to meet up with the target.

Your Excellency let me end this good will message by expressing our appreciation to the government partners and private sector that have organized this campaign. It is our hope that similar campaigns would be organized in all the States and LGAs to sensitize 30 million people on the need for hand washing after visiting toilets and before handling food.

Thank You and God Bless.