

Pacific WASH Webinars



Event details:

Handwashing and Water Supply in Informal Areas

3 February 2021

Presenters:

- Karl Galing
ADB WASH Advisor
(Consultant)
- Carlos Vasquez
Chief of WASH, UNICEF
PNG
- Seru Soderberg
Chief Operating Officer,
Water Authority of Fiji
- Victor Bamog
Disaster Coordination Office
Yap State Government, FSM

Moderator:

- Dean Taylor
ADB Utility Advisor
(Consultant)

Event recording and resources available [here](#).

Handwashing is a frontline defense to reduce transmission of common pathogens that cause preventable diseases. COVID-19 and the increase in handwashing programs, underlines the opportunities to create community handwashing behaviors and reduce the spread of common diseases. The Asian Development Bank's (ADB) Pacific WASH Technical Advisory Team is supporting Pacific utilities to promote more inclusive handwashing station designs, develop hygiene programs and facilities and overcome common barriers to implementation.

Workshop Overview

In February 2021, the ADB ran a virtual workshop in association with the Pacific Water and Wastewater Association (PWWA), UNICEF, the Water Authority of Fiji and Southern Yap Water Authority. Thirty five (35) participants from 12 water authorities across the Pacific region connected in the webinar. The workshop examined the impacts of COVID-19 and explored opportunities to promote good hygiene behaviors, improve the design and location of handwashing stations, and understand the barriers to implementation and the role of utilities in delivering handwashing strategies and programs. The workshop reviewed practical examples of handwashing programs in Papua New Guinea (PNG) to underline key learnings.

The workshop responded to these key questions:

- ❖ What is the impact of COVID-19 on handwashing behavior?
- ❖ What are the characteristics of successful handwashing programs?
- ❖ What does 'child-centered' handwashing station design mean?
- ❖ What role does the local community play in the design and location of handwashing stations?
- ❖ How can utilities overcome implementation barriers to coordinate handwashing facilities with water supply networks?

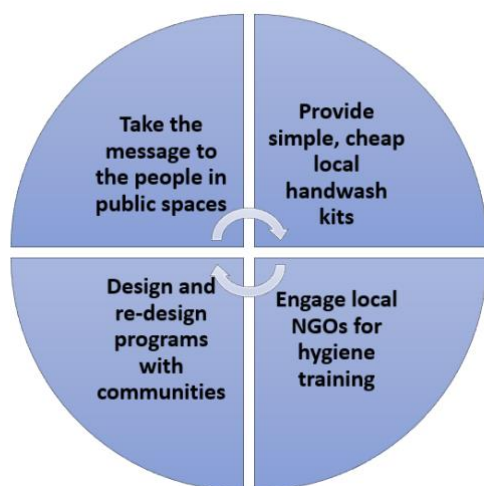


Handwashing campaign in PNG



Workshop Outputs

Lessons from UNICEF PNG Handwashing Program



Source: UNICEF PNG

Common barriers to implementing successful handwashing programs

The PNG case study served to stimulate workshop discussion about **barriers to implementing handwashing programs**. The role of utilities in promoting handwashing programs is often limited by the *availability of community connections* to a reticulated network, particularly in remote areas. Other challenges include *affordability of connection fees, land ownership and payments to landowners, water security and water theft, non-revenue water and willingness to pay* for water supply services. Examples of *remote handwashing facilities* from Fiji and Yap focused on the *infrastructure and transportation* required to establish supply by water tankers and on-site water collection facilities to unserved communities providing safe water supply to stimulate increased communal handwashing.

Learning Snapshots

- **Effective behavior change communication campaigns** integrate aspects of operation and maintenance of facilities to sustain good handwashing practices.
- **Start local.** Focus on the local community and use localized handwashing promotion to stimulate awareness via community-based communication channels.
- **Scale up to national promotion programs.** Once a program is established locally, scale up with a national promotion campaign across NGOs, CSOs and government departments.
- **Source simple hygiene kits.** The availability of simple kits can assist in driving community participation.
- **Technical design of WASH facilities** should carefully consider the needs and preferences of its users (human-centered design) allowing continuous improvement of its features through series of testing and redesigning.
- **Utilities have a critical role to play.** Utilities' water supply networks offer multiple opportunities to stimulate good handwashing behaviors despite some barriers.

Upcoming Events

To register for the upcoming 2021 webinar topics, please contact: lfernando@adb.org

Topic	Month (2021)
Chlorine disinfection	June
Affordable water services	July
Access to water and gender issues	August
Non-revenue water	September
Organisational culture	October

ADB continues to support water service providers in the region to build resilience, knowledge and capacity to manage threats in our changing world.