



## October 15- Global Handwashing Day

**Hand washing with soap is a “do it yourself vaccine”  
that prevents viruses and saves lives.**



Each year on October 15, over 200 million people are involved in Handwashing Day celebration around the world. The purpose of this day is to increase awareness and understanding about the importance of handwashing with soap as an effective and affordable way to prevent diseases.

Research shows that handwashing can prevent the transmission of a variety of pathogens, it may be more effective than any single vaccine.

To celebrate this day, JDA's WASH team organized a three day long series of puppet shows for the 2014 Global Handwashing Day. JDA decided that hosting the puppetry program was a fun and interactive way to promote the importance of washing hands with soap. The program educated on handwashing, diarrhea, and the use of safe water. As students watched the show, they learned about proper handwashing methods and how it is the most effective and inexpensive way to prevent diarrheal and respiratory infections.

JDA hosted the programs in three different schools in Balkh Province; Abu Zaid Balkhi Girls School in Dehdadi district; Shaeq Balkhi Boys School in Balkh district; and Dehsawar Girls School in Nahri Shahi district. These schools are located remotely, far from the center of the city, and some of the students must walk one to two hours to reach school. These communities do not have an information network to provide basic awareness about health and hygiene.



School	Participating Students
Abu Balkhi Girls High School	450
Shaqeq Balkhi High School	350
Dehsawar Girls High School	250
Total Participants	1050 students

In order for the effect of the program to last longer, JDA installed a sink with 144 liter capacity as a hand-washing facility. The presence of a handwashing facility is critical in getting students to wash their hands after each toilet use and contact to unclean surfaces. A water tank of 650-liters capacity was also installed at each school where the puppet shows were hosted. These tanks are connected to five Sawyer filters through a metallic stand to provide safe drinking water for students. The Sawyer filters are protected from external damages by a metallic safe box. The system was fully explained to the administration team at each school on how to operate it so the responsible person in each school now has the knowledge on how to take advantage of this system and regularly take care of it.



Students immediately start washing their hands with soap after the installation and dissemination of hygiene messages through conducting the show.

The provision of safe water through installation of a water tank connected to Sawyer filters is a major initiative for the school's water supply. Now, the students are drinking safe and clean water. The creation of a hand washing facility was also critical to each school.

JDA's efforts vastly covered and provided vital awareness for the students in these three schools. In general, 1050 students participated and received the hygiene messages and they will certainly disseminate and share what they have learned from the puppet program to other friends, siblings, and members of their families and communities.

Providing children with the knowledge and skills of handwashing will give them the capacity to protect themselves from sickness. We hope that we can continue to carry on this life-saving message and reach more students for the 2015 Global Handwashing Day.

**Hand Washing. "It's such an easy thing to do."**