

Advocacy toolkit case studies

IMPROVING HAND WASHING IN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)

THEME:	Water, sanitation and hygiene
ADVOCACY APPROACHES:	Community mobilisation Mobilising people and campaigning Using the media

In Kivu in DRC, where a Tearfund partner was working on provision of water and sanitation, it decided to mark Global Handwashing Day, an annual event designed to raise awareness of the importance of improving hygiene practices. The campaign was based on the fact that, although people wash their hands with water, very few wash their hands during critical moments, including after using the toilet, while cleaning a child and before handling food.

Throughout Global Handwashing Day, the partner conducted radio talks to sensitise local communities and mobilise them to wash their hands with soap. They also joined with community members, local authority leaders and others to march through the town, before a keynote address was delivered by the public health inspector for the areas, which was broadcast live on radio.

As a result, many eating places started providing hand washing facilities with soap and the local government administration announced that it would take steps to enforce this strategy, as it believed it was key to curbing diseases such as cholera. The radio stations also continued to make public announcements about the importance of washing hands at critical times.