



# STRENGTHENING HAND HYGIENE IN BABATI SCHOOLS

MIKONO SALAMA – SAFE HANDS

OCTOBER 2022 UPDATE

LTT's Mikono Salama (Safe Hands) programme aims to improve hand hygiene in schools by increasing access to safe and sustainable handwashing facilities and by raising awareness amongst students and teachers of the importance of handwashing.

The extremely generous support of our donors has allowed us to scale our Mikono Salama programme out across 16 schools in Babati, Northern Tanzania, benefiting over 10,500 children to date and we are thrilled to share an update on the programme with you.

## WITH YOUR SUPPORT WE HAVE.....



Trained 85 key people from 16 schools as Handwashing Ambassadors – they are now driving hand hygiene awareness in their schools.



Installed 48 group handwashing facilities across 16 schools and supplied all schools with starter soap kits.



Ensured that 10,527 children have access to handwashing facilities and can participate in handwashing training at school

### Programme Overview

In March 2020, before the coronavirus pandemic, 75% of primary schools in Babati had no handwashing facilities at all, putting thousands of children at risk everyday. In the wake of the pandemic schools were required to provide some form of handwashing facility but many schools struggled to do so or were only able to provide temporary facilities that were easily broken, not always available to children and insufficient to meet student needs.

Born out of our emergency response to the pandemic, LTT's Mikono Salama programme aims to address this and improve hand hygiene for the long term by ensuring sustainable access for children to both improved handwashing facilities and to hygiene education. In doing so the programme supports long term behaviour change, ensuring that children understand and follow best practice handwashing so that they can better protect themselves, their families and their communities, now and into the future.

Through the programme we:-

- **Construct and install multi-user handwashing stations.** These are simple, child-friendly handwashing stations that up to 8 students can use at the same time. Each stand is connected to an easily refillable water reservoir and is equipped with soap dispensers. The stands are made and installed by local 'fundis' (Builders) in Babati and schools receive advice on maintenance as part of their training.
- **Supply starter packs of locally made soap.** Liquid soap is sourced locally in Babati, supporting the local economy and connecting schools with a local supplier for ongoing soap orders in the future.



- **Provide hygiene awareness training to teachers and school management committees.** Training equips key school representatives with the knowledge and skills to deliver behaviour change hygiene education for students and builds support amongst school management committees to ensure hand hygiene continues to be a priority beyond our activities. Where possible we also work with local sign painters to create handwashing murals to reinforce positive hygiene messages in schools.



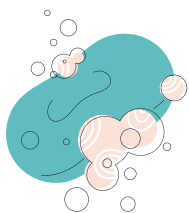
### Progress to date

Working with the local education authorities and with participating schools in Babati, we have now delivered the programme across 16 primary schools.

To assess the progress of the programme we conduct baseline and exit surveys with teachers and a sample of students from each school as well as collecting qualitative feedback and conducting site inspections at each school. Below are the key results across the programme to date.



**10,527 children across Babati** now have access to improved handwashing facilities and hygiene education in their schools, promoting improved hand hygiene for young people in Babati.



### All schools have taken steps to improve handwashing provision in their schools.

All 16 schools that have participated in the programme now have permanent and function handwashing facilities, that is 48 handwashing stations - creating 384 handwashing points for children. Spot checks conducted by our team have confirmed that the new handwashing facilities are robust, fit for purpose and are being regularly used and maintained in every school.

All of the schools have also increased the availability of soap and water to enable handwashing. 13 of the 16 schools now report providing soap for handwashing throughout the school day with the remaining 3 schools providing soap at key times of day. This is an improvement from 0 schools providing soap and water all the time in March 2020. Site inspections carried out by our team have also confirmed observable improvements in the regularity and consistency of soap availability for handwashing in schools.

100% of schools have committed to maintaining the supply of soap throughout the forthcoming academic year and will ensure funds are allocated from their school budgets to support this. Across the most recent schools to graduate from the programme all 5 schools have increased their budget for soap, demonstrating a major commitment to improving student health and wellbeing.

*"Everyone at our school is now aware about the importance of handwashing and using soap - now we are all working together to support proper handwashing for our students"*

*-Teacher, Babati*



**All schools** have taken action to improve and increase the provision of hygiene education for their students. Trained teachers in each school have formed student WASH Clubs (water, sanitation and hygiene clubs) to deliver hand hygiene training to students and to promote peer to peer education. Each club consists of between 20 and 40 students and each member is encouraged to share their knowledge with at least 3 other students in the school.

**92% of surveyed students now report taking part in hygiene education sessions** at their school which emphasise the use of soap for handwashing at critical times of day. This is an increase from just 30% of students who reported having ever taken part in a handwashing workshop or education session before the programme.

86% of surveyed students also report taking part in handwashing practices at least 1x a week at their school as part of the schools efforts to promote good hand hygiene.



Handwashing behaviours have improved across the schools with **95% of surveyed students now reporting regularly washing their hands with soap, up from just 38% of students reporting this before the programme launched in their schools.**

Very encouragingly when asked about the handwashing behaviours of their peers 89% now report that the majority of their classmates wash their hands with soap at critical times such as after using the toilet, up from just 27% reporting this at the baseline. Student awareness of critical times for handwashing has also improved with 96% now identifying 'before eating' as a critical time to wash your hands, up from just 50% at baseline.

In feedback discussions with students the vast majority agreed that workshops, WASH clubs and access to group handwashing facilities had improved students handwashing skills, increased how often students were washing their hands and had contributed to improving hygiene at their school.



**All participating schools report observing significant improvements in handwashing practices amongst students** and have fed back to our team that the programme has improved student's hygiene skills.

Encouragingly schools have also indicated an improvement in School Leadership Teams engagement with and commitment to promoting hand hygiene at school. This has included: ensuring water, sanitation and hygiene issues are discussed as critical issues in school management meetings, that soap supplies are maintained and soap is available to students, promoting hand hygiene amongst parents and supporting the delivery of hand hygiene workshops. This is an important step in ensuring the sustainability of the programme and the continued functioning of handwashing facilities in schools beyond LTT's engagement.



## **Impact of COVID-19 on handwashing and ensuring sustainability**

The Coronavirus pandemic significantly changed attitudes to hand hygiene in Babati. It meant schools were required to prioritise handwashing and there was an overall increase in awareness of the importance of hand hygiene.

We have learnt, from working with schools in the wake of the pandemic that the facilities that schools were able to put in place in early 2020 have been prone to damage and theft. In addition, with large student numbers individual tap buckets have been an insufficient and unsustainable solution for schools in Babati. In contrast the permanent child friendly facilities supplied through our programme have endured, becoming central features of the school campus and a useful tool both for teaching good handwashing and for facilitating and promoting regular handwashing practices.

We have also seen that while attitudes and practices appeared to change significantly during the early stages of the pandemic, already by September 2020 the emphasis and attention on handwashing was beginning to drop off and old, poor hand hygiene habits were re-emerging. For example when conducting pre-programme surveys with new schools to join the Mikono Salama Programme in January 2022 just 16% of students reported that the majority of their classmates were regularly washing their hands. This suggests that without the nation wide and global encouragement for handwashing to protect against COVID-19 positive hand hygiene behaviours were not being sustained.

This has made the work of the programme ever more important, supporting entire school communities to make a long term commitment to promoting and prioritising hand hygiene, ensuring that schools are healthy and safe environments for children now and into the future.



## **Financial Reporting**

We are thankful for all the extreme generosity shown towards our work in strengthen hand hygiene in Babati schools.

This support has enabled us to deliver our Mikono Salama Programme across 5 schools in Babati - a breakdown of expenditure is available [here](#).

Thank you so much for your support!

## **Conclusions and Next Steps**

Our Mikono Salama programme has made great progress, working in partnership with schools, communities and the local education authorities in Babati to increase access to appropriate handwashing facilities in schools and to raise awareness of the importance of hand hygiene. We have now completed the programme across 16 schools in Babati and will be launching the programme at a further 6 schools over the next 6 months. Our ambition is to ensure that every primary school in Babati has handwashing facilities by April 2024, ensuring that no child is left behind as we strengthen handwashing in Babati.

**Thank you once again for your support!**