

Hospital Project Celebrated by Officials in Zimbabwe

Soapbox was recently invited to take part in a handover ceremony by officials of Kadoma City Municipality in Zimbabwe for its role in improving infection prevention and control in the local Rimuka Maternity Hospital. Soapbox contributed to the purchase of essential new medical and cleaning equipment and organised infection, prevention and control (IPC) training for health workers and cleaners at the hospital in Kadoma.

The purpose of the ceremony was to celebrate the handing over of Soapbox funded equipment to the hospital and the success of the Soapbox supported training programme.



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Soapbox associate, Tendai Mhlanga, who was in Zimbabwe at the time, was on hand to join the event on behalf of our team.

The event was attended by a number of high profile figures including the Minister of Health, UN officials, church leaders, politicians, local dignitaries, the media and members of the general public.

Attendees enjoyed a packed programme of entertainment with a combination of music, dancing and speeches, followed by a celebratory lunch for invited guests. Tendai was presented with a shield for Soapbox from Kadoma City who commended our contribution to the hospital improvements.

Following the ceremony there have been several enquiries from other localities for similar training and for a continuation of links between Kadoma City and Soapbox.



Soap Matters

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... Saving a million lives with clean safe care at birth



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Welcome to our fourth edition of Soap Matters, Soapbox's quarterly newsletter.

We've had a busy end to the year as our work continues to gain momentum across our partner countries Africa and Asia.

In our last edition we reported on our successful WASH & CLEAN workshop in Gujarat, India. The WASH & CLEAN project aims to develop novel methods for capturing evidence of cleanliness and the relationship to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) conditions in maternity units. Read more below on the testing of the tools and data collection

in India and Bangladesh.

Celebrations were had in Zimbabwe at Rimuka Maternity Hospital marking the success of Soapbox supported efforts to upgrade equipment and provide training on infection prevention and control. A representative of Soapbox was on-hand to join in the party and report back on the improvements made.

We continue to disseminate the messages of Soapbox through attendance at a number of public events, including a 'Pecha Kucha' evening hosted by the University of Aberdeen.

Our team has also grown as we've welcomed two new Research Fellows to Soapbox, based at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

Read on to find out more about our latest activities and from all at Soapbox—Season's Greetings.

Wash & Clean Update: Data Collection Starts in India and Bangladesh

The WASH & CLEAN project continues to go from strength to strength as the data collection for the formative phase of the project gets underway with tools being tested in two health facilities in India and two in Bangladesh.

BRAC in Bangladesh have completed a number of data collection elements including the photo-prompted individual interviews and focus group discussions with women who delivered a baby in one of the focus health facilities within the last six months. The aim of the interviews and focus group discussions are to identify women's views and satisfaction with regard to their perceptions of cleanliness in the facility during their time there and infection prevention and control practices performed by facility staff.

The Institute for Public Health (IIPH) in India have collected relevant documents from the focus facilities with regard to infection prevention and control and have applied the WASH & CLEAN Needs Assessment Tool in one of the facilities. The WASH & CLEAN Walkthrough Checklist will be conducted before Christmas as well as the participatory photography workshops and the interviews with management, healthcare providers and cleaners.

This is an exciting phase for WASH & CLEAN as we find out how the tools we have spent much time and effort developing work in practice. Preparations are underway for a meeting in January to discuss the findings of the formative phase and make any necessary adjustments ahead of the situation analysis phase scheduled to start in February.



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Soapbox explained in exactly 6 minutes & 40 seconds

As part of One World Week, Professor Graham, one of Soapbox's co-founders, presented to an audience of researchers, experts in international development, and the general public the appalling state of maternity units in developing countries, the fact that 'it does not have to be like this' and the role of Soapbox in improving these life threatening conditions... all in 6 minutes and 40 seconds!

Professor Graham was invited to present at a 'Pecha Kucha' event hosted by the University of Aberdeen. Pecha Kucha, the Japanese term for 'chit chat', is a (rather difficult) method of presentation where 20 images are shown to the audience for 20 seconds each with presenters talking along with the images.

At the Aberdeen event the Pecha Kucha presentations covered a wide variety of topics reflecting a diverse mix of ideas in areas of conservation, sustainability and international development.

The use of imagery as a form of 'visual evidence' is central to the work of Soapbox. Measuring quality of care is key to

determining the acceptability of standards on maternity units; often these measurements are displayed in the form of charts, graphs and tables. However, it also rings true that 'an image speaks a thousand words', offering an alternative form of evidence and method of accountability.

The Pecha Kucha event was an excellent way of illustrating the critical need for the work of Soapbox in maternity units across the world.



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Two new Research Fellows to join Soapbox

We would like to extend a warm welcome to Giorgia Gon and Susannah Woodd who will be joining Soapbox in early January.

Both Giorgia and Susannah will be based at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) and will contribute to secondary research projects around hygiene and infection prevention at the time of childbirth.



Giorgia Gon

Giorgia will take part in a Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) research project which aims to improve maternal health in Zanzibar. Part of her role will also be to assist in the development of systematic reviews to inform future Soapbox activities. Susannah's main role will be to conduct systematic reviews to inform

the development of a package of clean interventions for facility deliveries.

Giorgia is a recent graduate of the LSHTM, with a Master's degree in Epidemiology. During her Masters she examined whether water and sanitation were risk factors for maternal mortality in Afghanistan. Prior to this, she received her Bachelor's in Human Sciences at Oxford University. She worked as a Programme Assistant for Merlin in Juba, South Sudan and as a Consultant for the OECD in the UK. She was also a Monitoring Evaluation Accountability and Learning Intern at Merlin and a Young Professional Intern at the HIV-AIDS Unit for UNOCD in the Greater Jakarta Area, Indonesia.

Susannah studied medicine at the University of Edinburgh and trained in General Practice in south London where she worked as a GP for 3 years. She then moved to Malawi for almost 5 years working as the head of

the clinical team at St Luke's Mission Hospital. Her responsibilities while there included monthly supervision visits to rural health centres providing outpatient and maternity services. She returned to the UK to study for a Masters in Public Health in Developing Countries at LSHTM. Since graduating she has worked on a trial of nutrition supplements for malnourished HIV adults in Zambia and Tanzania. Susannah welcomes the opportunity to move into maternal and neonatal research and is particularly interested in ways to improve quality of care provided by primary level facilities. Susannah is "really excited to have this opportunity to work with Soapbox and is especially pleased to be working with an organisation which combines research with evaluation and implementation".



Susannah Woodd

Commonwealth Fellows to visit Aberdeen

Soapbox has recently been awarded funding from the Commonwealth Professional Fellowship Scheme. The scheme is a professional development programme designed to support mid-career professionals from developing Commonwealth countries to spend a period of time with a UK host organisation. The programme is designed to have a catalytic effect by enhancing skills that will subsequently be applied in developing Commonwealth countries.

Soapbox will host the visit by two health professionals from India and Nigeria. Dr Prakesh Vaghela is Deputy Director of Rural Health in Gujarat, India and Dr Abdullahi

Randawa is the head of Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital in Nigeria. A third Fellow will also attend the programme in Aberdeen, Dr Kebba Maneh, Director of the Jammeh Foundation Hospital in the Gambia. Dr Maneh's visit will be funded by Soapbox as the Gambia is no longer a member of the Commonwealth.

The programme will run for 6 weeks and has been designed to strengthen leadership, management and technical oversight skills in the area of quality improvement of maternal and newborn health services and so support contribution to achieving MDGs 4 & 5 in the participants' country of origin. The content of the programme comprises a combination of seminars, lectures and

interactive orientation sessions and will include attendance, with mentors from NHS Grampian and University of Aberdeen, to the 19th Annual International Forum on Quality and Safety in Health care.

Representatives from Soapbox and NHS Grampian will provide additional support to the fellows to help develop plans to implement and roll out an infection prevention training programme—the Maternal Health Cleanliness Champions Initiative (MCCI) - upon their return home.



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We will shortly be advertising a number of exciting new opportunities to work with Soapbox including Country Coordinator and Operations Manager positions. If you would like to find out more information about these posts please contact us at info@soapboxcollaborative.org or visit our website: www.soapboxcollaborative.org