About the Program

The Global Program on Water and Hygiene at the Center for Communication Programs (CCP) collaborates with many international, government and private organizations, including WHO, Procter & Gamble, Unilever, UNICEF, CARE, PSI, USAID, and the World Bank to promote safe water and hygiene and bridge the gap between behavior and technologies. The program includes:

- State-of-the-art assessment, research and evaluation to understand behaviors around safe water and hygiene.
- Alliance building and private-public partnership to achieve sustainability.
- Designing and implementing participatory health communication programs at scale.
- Building supportive environments through effective advocacy.
- Engaging communities, families and consumers in the design and use of alternative water treatment technologies and hygiene products.

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Understanding Behavior

CCP’s pioneering work in safe water research began by identifying the social and cultural factors that influence water and hygiene behavior. From this groundbreaking research, CCP developed the first complete model of safe water behavior as part of a cluster of related behaviors and diseases. CCP’s research showed that predictors of sustained water treatment behavior are not related to health benefits, such as diarrhea prevention, but instead to other cognitive, emotional, and social support factors.

Emergency Response. Water treatment and hygiene communication programs have been implemented in response to emergencies in Indonesia and Nicaragua. In the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch in Nicaragua, CCP implemented a comprehensive water treatment, hand washing with soap, and sanitation program via the Blue Star campaign. In 2004 after a tsunami devastated portions of Southeast Asia, CCP joined with CARE to lead an integrated communication initiative, Glee ("clean"), designed to reduce the incidence of diarrheal disease in children in Aceh. After the 2006 earthquake in Jogjakarta, CCP joined with UNICEF and other organizations to provide water treatment behavior expertise and products like Air RahMat in the affected areas. In Indonesia, CCP is also implementing two safe water programs with Procter & Gamble to improve access to PuR™, its innovative water cleaning product.

Working in the Field

Water treatment. Promotion of household water treatment and proper storage has been the main objective of program activities in Ethiopia, Haiti, Indonesia and Pakistan. In Indonesia, CCP is establishing the first-ever, at-scale sustainable commercial safe water program. With support from USAID, the Indonesian Public-Private Partnership —Aman Tirta— is creating demand for a water cleaning product (Air RahMat) that is economical and easy to use, as an alternative to boiling, which is becoming increasingly expensive.

Hygiene. Hand washing with soap has been the focus of programs responding to emergencies, including Nicaragua’s Hurricane Mitch, the tsunami in Indonesia, and Avian Flu in Egypt. In collaboration with "Alam Simsas," the Egyptian version of Sesame Street™, the Communication for Healthy Living Project produced TV spots and materials focusing on hand washing with soap and other hygiene practices. Also, to prevent the spread of Avian Flu, CCP worked with the Government of Indonesia, USAID, and Unilever to develop a hand-washing with soap campaign. The campaign urged the public to wash their hands properly, with soap, at critical times as an effective way to prevent illness and it created awareness of the potential hazards of improper food preparation and handling live chickens and raw chicken meat. Hand washing with soap and sanitation are also the focus of the USAID-funded Environmental Services Project in Indonesia where CCP has partnered with DAI. CCP is launching a mass media campaign, a community and school-based programs and a Private Public Partnership initiative to promote environmental and hygiene behaviors.

Global Leadership

CCP is a founding member of the International Network to Promote Household Water Treatment and Safe Storage, which includes representatives of development agencies, non-governmental organizations, research institutions, and the private sector. Through the Network, CCP shares its expertise in health behavior with the larger safe water community.