



Unilever

Sustainable
Development
Report 2007:
Nutrition,
hygiene &
well-being



Nutrition, hygiene & well-being

Through our brands we can make a difference to the health and well-being of millions of people.

Contents

Nutrition	2
Why it matters.....	6
Our approach to tackling obesity	8
Working with others	9
Innovation	12
Hygiene & well-being	15
Why it matters.....	20
Our approach	21
Working with others	23

This section of the online Sustainable Development Report 2007 is available at: www.unilever.com/ourvalues/environment-society/sustainable-development-report/nutrition-hygiene-wellbeing

Nutrition

Our brands influence the diets of millions of people. Our challenge is to offer consumers the healthy choice without compromising taste, convenience and affordability.

Our contribution

We can make a difference to the diets of consumers by improving the nutritional quality of our foods and beverages. Our Nutrition Enhancement Programme (NEP) continues to do this by reducing levels of trans fat, saturated fat, salt and sugar. This is done by assessing our products using benchmarks based on international dietary guidelines.



Since late 2005 the NEP has been reviewing our food and beverage portfolio. In 2007 we completed the assessment of all 22 000 retail and food service products. From this review we found around a third of products are in line with internationally accepted guidelines for fat, sugar and salt, qualifying them for the Choices stamp. This process has led to plans for improving the nutritional quality of more than half our total portfolio.

The NEP has led to significant changes in many of our products. For example:

Sugar:

- We have reduced by up to 20% the added sugars in our range of children's water ices such as the Calippo and Twister brands.
- We relaunched Lipton Ice Tea in seven European countries with 15% less sugar.
- A ready to drink Green Ice Tea was introduced in four European countries with 30% less sugar

Salt:

- Salt levels in soups have been cut, with an average reduction of 10% in European dry soups and 7% in Latin America.
- Knorr and Lipton side dishes in North America have also seen reductions in salt of 10-15%.
- The Pot Noodle range in the UK and Ireland now has up to 50% less salt per pot.

Fat:

- The majority of our Family Goodness (Rama/Blue Band) products in

Latin America and Asia have optimised their mix of vegetable oils in order to reduce saturated fat content by up to 25%.

- Breyers ice cream launched 'fat free' and 'light' ranges in North America with up to 50% less saturated fat.

In making these reductions we have had to balance nutritional content against how a product tastes so that we do not spoil consumers' enjoyment of our foods. This is a difficult task for our product developers since in blind tasting consumers often prefer well-salted products or those with higher levels of fat. An article discussing these benchmarks and the role they can play in improving the nutritional quality of foods and beverages was published in the European Journal of Clinical Nutrition in 2007.

Increasing consumer information

Helping consumers make healthier choices means providing clear information.



Using a front-of-pack stamp, the Choices Programme enables consumers to identify healthier products – foods and drinks that are in line with internationally accepted dietary advice on fat, sugar and salt. The stamp is complemented by back-of-pack nutrition information.

Choices continues to make progress with its roll-out around the world with products carrying the Choices stamp available in over 50 countries.

The Choices programme is open to all companies to use and can be applied to most foods and drinks. In 2007 the Choices International Foundation was launched with an independent International Scientific Committee to help monitor the qualifying criteria for the programme.

We are committed to providing nutritional information on all our product packs. In Europe, we are participating in a voluntary CIAA (Confederation of Food and Drink Industries of the European Union) nutritional labelling initiative which complements Choices. Under this initiative, on the back of all our packs we will show the levels of eight key nutrients (energy, protein, carbohydrates, sugars, fat, saturates, fibre and sodium) per 100g/ml and five of these (energy, fat, saturated fat, sugar and salt) as percentages of guideline daily amounts (GDA). We will also show calories on the front of packs as a percentage of GDA.

In Europe, around 50% of our products now show this level of information and by the end of 2008 we aim for this to rise to 90%.

We are extending this approach to other regions too where market conditions allow. In Australia, for example, we follow the CIAA approach.

In the UK, along with all major manufacturers and most retailers, we mark GDA on the front of pack too.

Innovating to improve consumer choice

Increasingly our innovations focus on making a positive contribution to people's diets. More than two-thirds of the products in our R&D pipeline have what we call 'Vitality' benefits: specific nutritional and health benefits.

To improve consumer choice we provide a range of variants. For example, in mayonnaise we offer Hellmann's Original mayonnaise (80% fat), Hellmann's Light (30% fat) and Hellmann's Extra Light (3% fat). The Extra Light variant employs new technology using natural citrus fibre, this reduces oil and calorie content while maintaining a creamy texture.

We also offer smaller portion sizes, for example in ice cream, our 60 ml Magnum Mini Classic contains 163 calories compared to a regular 120 ml Magnum Classic of 261 calories.

Sales of Knorr Vie fruit and vegetable shots continued to grow, increasing by 67% with around 162 million bottles sold in Europe in 2007.

After successful test marketing in Belgium and Ireland in 2006, Frusì, our frozen yoghurt with fruit and wholegrain cereals, has been rolled out in France, Italy, the Netherlands and UK. Frusì contains no more than 110 calories per 100ml pot and just 2.4 g of fat. Each pot also provides 50% of the recommended daily allowance of vitamin C.

Knorr's healthy eating campaign encourages consumers to eat colourful vegetables with the help of a range of new colour-themed products. The campaign was inspired by the insight that brightly coloured vegetables indicate the presence of different beneficial antioxidants.



Responsible marketing

Through our marketing and advertising we have the opportunity to inform people about the benefits of our products and innovations. Knorr, for example, encourages the consumption of vegetables through its 'Eat Colour' campaign. It is also a way for us to engage with consumers on issues that matter to them.

At the same time we acknowledge the influence of marketing on consumers and take our responsibilities seriously. For example, people in many parts of the world have concerns about advertising food to children.

Our Food and Beverage Marketing Principles provide guidance to our managers. They specifically prohibit any advertising to children under the age of six. Marketing to children between six and 12 is only permitted if the product meets strict nutritional criteria. This principle has also enabled us to take a leading role in agreeing cross-industry voluntary commitments and pledges to restrict advertising to children in regions such as the US and Europe.

In May 2007 we also committed to use only models who have a body mass index between 18.5 and 25 in our advertising. This range is in line with United Nations guidance on what is considered healthy and precludes the use of 'size zero' models.

Online advertising and communication is a growing trend. With people everywhere being able to access online material, our new internet marketing guidelines ensure that campaigns aimed at a particular market are sensitive to cultural differences in other parts of the world.

Tackling under-nutrition

Our foods can play an important role in tackling under-nutrition and micronutrient deficiencies in particular. A number of our products are fortified with essential vitamins and minerals. Our Rama/Blue Band margarine, for example, contains vitamins A, B and D and our new Amaze Brainfood products contain iron and iodine, important nutrients for children's mental development. Annapurna iodised salt helps prevent diseases caused by iodine deficiency and is now available in India, Ghana, Nigeria and Malawi.

Our contribution to solving the issues of under-nutrition goes beyond the nutritional value of our products. The complex social and public health challenges of poor nutrition and hygiene can only be solved by working in partnership with others.

We participate in global initiatives to improve nutrition through food fortification, for example through our involvement with the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN).

Why it matters

Around the world concern is rising about the role that nutrition plays in public health.

The challenges

Governments and individuals recognise that what we consume has both positive and negative impacts on our health and well-being. Over-consumption of certain nutrients can lead to obesity and heart disease, especially when combined with a lack of physical activity. According to the World Health Organization, more than 1 billion adults are classed as overweight, with 300 million clinically obese. Childhood obesity is a particular concern.

Health professionals agree that obesity poses a serious health risk and can lead to a wide range of diet-related diseases such as type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure and strokes. Even if people are not overweight, factors such as excess salt, sugar and fat in the diet are linked to these chronic diseases.

At the same time 'under-nutrition' – not getting enough of the right type of nutrients – remains a critical issue facing individuals and communities around the world. According to the United Nations World Food Programme, more than 850 million people are malnourished, mostly in the developing world.

Given the relationship between diet and health, governments are under pressure to intervene. The spotlight is increasingly on food companies to improve their products and to be more transparent and responsible in their communication and marketing.

Our contribution

Our commercial success depends on selling a broad range of food and beverages. The twin issues of over- and under-nutrition pose real challenges as well as business opportunities.

If we do not respond to concerns from consumers and governments, we face lost sales, increased regulation and damage to our reputation. Equally this agenda provides opportunities to expand sales of brands that can make a specific contribution to a healthy and nutritious diet.

Our industry needs to help consumers make healthier choices, while still offering foods that they can enjoy without compromising on taste. We seek to achieve this, working with others in society who also have a role to play: governments, health bodies, consumer pressure groups and the media.

Making the healthy choice

Many factors influence people's ability to get the right nutritional balance. Ultimately consumers decide what they eat and how they balance their diets and lifestyles. However consumer choices can be influenced and even constrained by factors such as affordability and lack of awareness and access to quality products. Marketing and advertising has the power directly to influence consumer habits and perceptions, both negatively and positively.

We believe our most important contribution is to help people make healthier choices through improvements to our portfolio of products; enhancing nutrition labelling and information; providing greater consumer choice and marketing responsibly.

Our action in these areas is made more effective when we work in partnership with governments, communities and non-profit organisations. This is a consistent hallmark of our approach.

Our approach to tackling obesity

There are growing political and societal concerns surrounding increasing levels of obesity. The food industry has a role to play in tackling this important public health issue.

Our approach

Over the past two years we have taken a number of steps to help tackle obesity and the diseases associated with it:

- on labelling, we committed to including clear information on all our packs about the calorific content of our products;
- on product formulation, we defined a unique set of metrics to help evaluate the optimal level of calories in our different foods based on the role they play in a person's diet, ie whether they are part of a main meal or a snack;
- we also continued to reduce the level of saturated and trans fats in our products, and as part of our communications, help people distinguish between 'good fats' (unsaturated) and 'bad fats' (trans and saturated);
- on advertising to children, we have placed restrictions on our food and beverage marketing to children under 12 for all products except those that qualify for our Choices stamp (see Consumers);
- to increase consumer choice, we continued to offer alternatives such as Hellmann's Original Mayonnaise (80% fat), Hellmann's Light (30% fat) and Hellmann's Extra Light (3% fat);
- to encourage physical activity, we continued to support initiatives that encourage an active lifestyle and raise awareness of the risks of heart disease – such as Flora/Becel's marathon sponsorships and the renewal of our partnership with the World Heart Federation for a further three years;
- nutrition and health are a core part of our own employee well-being programme; and
- we help people manage their weight through our Slim-fast range.

Working with others

We work with our partners to achieve long-term solutions to the many health and nutrition challenges facing consumers around the world.

Global partnerships to enhance nutrition

We believe the complexity of the global nutrition and health issues such as over- and under-nutrition warrants a joint approach by the public and private sector. Working with partners is essential if we are to achieve our goals. In such partnerships our consumer research and marketing insights, as well as our R&D capabilities and nutrition expertise, can make a difference by providing an understanding of changing consumer lifestyles, consumer needs and what prompts effective behaviour change. Our partners provide in-depth insights into nutrition and health issues and their social context as well as their local networks and capabilities to facilitate change.



We seek to play our part in addressing global health and nutrition issues, working with a range of international health organisations, including UNICEF on children's health and development, the UN World Food Programme on combating child hunger and improving child nutrition, the World Heart Federation on cardiovascular health and the World Health Organization on combating chronic diseases including obesity.

In early 2006 we formed our Partnership development group to co-ordinate our collaboration with global health organisations. This group is based in our Unilever Food & Health Research Institute and reports into our senior vice president of corporate responsibility.

We have numerous health and nutrition partnerships co-ordinated and implemented at a local level. These are some of our principal international partnerships:

UNICEF

We are working with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to cut childhood mortality through combined nutrition and hygiene projects in Asia and Africa. This will help to achieve UN Millennium Development Goal 4, which seeks a two-thirds reduction, between 1990 and 2015, in the under-five mortality rate.



In Asia, UNICEF, Unilever and non-profit organisation Synergos have formed the Partnership for Child Nutrition. Starting in India as the Bhavishya Alliance, it comprises a broad coalition of government, private sector and community-based organisations to develop solutions to combat child malnutrition in India by 50% by 2015. Pilot projects are now being conducted in rural and urban areas with the aim of achieving measurable reductions in child malnutrition.

Supported by the Amaze brand, UNICEF Turkey and Unilever Turkey recently teamed up to raise consumer awareness of the need for iodine and iron in school children's diets to improve mental development.

UN World Food Programme

Unilever has been fundraising for the UN's World Food Programme for several years and we have made considerable cash and in-kind contributions. For example in 2005, we contributed to the WFP's relief efforts in response to the Asian tsunami and to the Côte-d'Ivoire and Niger food crises and only recently Unilever Kenya contributed US\$1 million to help the WFP in the Kenyan emergency operation following the recent troubles which followed the presidential elections.



In December 2006, Unilever formed a three-year partnership with the UN World Food Programme, the world's largest humanitarian agency, called 'Together for Child Vitality' to help improve the nutrition and health of children through their school-feeding programme. In 2007 Unilever contributed a total of €2.1 million of which €1.4 million went towards the provision of school meals. We are also developing a school education campaign on nutrition, health and hygiene.

Highlights from 2007:

- Our donations enabled more than 15 million school meals to be provided to 80 000 children in Kenya, Indonesia, Colombia and Ghana.
- Through cause-related marketing campaigns, our Rama/Blue Band margarine brands helped raise awareness about hunger funds for WFP.
- Our employees raised additional funds through local fund-raising activities and participation in a Walk the World event, with over 3 500 staff in 14 countries taking part.
- Research is underway in Kenya and Indonesia for the development of educational campaigns.
- We have also set up a dedicated unit for Unilever employees to take part in secondments at the World Food Programme, contributing skills in human resources, supply chain management, communications and nutrition.

World Heart Federation

Cardiovascular disease is the number one cause of premature death worldwide. Unilever's partnership with



the World Heart Federation (WHF) seeks to increase awareness of the role a healthy diet and lifestyle can play in helping to maintain heart health and reducing the risk of cardiovascular problems.

The WHF is a global organisation committed to the prevention and control of heart disease and stroke and is made up of over 170 medical societies and heart charities from 100 countries.

Since 2003, the World Heart Federation and our heart health brand, Becel/Flora, have worked in partnership to increase consumer awareness of cardiovascular disease prevention. In 2006 we renewed our WHF partnership for a further three years.

We are a key sponsor of World Heart Day each September and have co-published with WHF a booklet on heart disease and cholesterol. In 2007 we supported World Heart Day with a range of activities including radio sponsorship in Poland, a media event in Sri Lanka and an interview with a leading cardiologist in Mexico.

Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition

As part of our work toward achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals, we serve on the Board of the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), a consortium of UN organisations, major NGOs and private sector organisations. GAIN seeks to improve health through the elimination of vitamin and mineral deficiencies using food fortification. GAIN is supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the World Bank Institute. We also chair the GAIN Business Alliance, launched in China in October 2005, which aims to create a common understanding of the challenges and opportunities of food fortification and the role of the public and private sector in combating micronutrient deficiencies in developing countries.

Innovation

By investing in research and development, we aim to develop products that help provide greater choice for our consumers and meet their needs for tasty and healthy options.

Our R&D test kitchen in the Netherlands is one of our centres of culinary expertise. Its chefs create ideas for new products, recipes and product demonstrations for our Foodsolutions professional catering business, as well as providing culinary training for employees.



Innovating to widen consumer choice

We aim to provide consumers with choice in terms of product varieties, such as low-fat and low-sugar versions of our ice creams, and low-fat versions of our margarines. We also invest in developing new products with added health and nutrition benefits.

This work is led by the Unilever Food and Health Research Institute, which employs around 450 scientific staff and collaborates with external experts on product innovation and enhancement.

Our work at the Institute is part of our wider commitment to research and development across both our Foods and Home and Personal Care categories. Around 6000 Unilever scientists and product developers work on the discovery and development of new ingredients and processes for products that provide proven benefits in nutrition, hygiene and personal care for consumers while minimising environmental impacts. In 2007, we invested €868 million in R&D, equivalent to 2.2% of sales.

Here are some examples of recent innovations:

Knorr Vie – increasing fruit & vegetable intake

People the world over do not eat enough fruit and vegetables. The World Health Organization and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization recommend a minimum intake of 400g/day, but the average is only 100g/day in developing countries and around 300g/day in the western world.



In 2005 we launched Knorr Vie in Europe, a smoothie-style shot made from concentrated vegetable and fruit juices without any additives. In a 100ml bottle, it provides half the recommended daily intake of fruit and vegetables.

Sales of Knorr Vie fruit and vegetable shots continued to grow, increasing by 67% with around 162 million bottles sold in Europe in 2007.

Ice cream – a choice of ice creams

We invest around €50 million in ice cream research and development each year, and 40% of this is now devoted to opportunities in the fast-growing health and wellness sector.



Ice cream is primarily about pleasure and indulgence, but eaten sensibly it can form part of a nutritionally balanced diet. We provide a broad range of options, with light, low-fat and no-sugar-added versions. Many brands, such as Cornetto and Magnum, are available in snack size, too, to help with calorie control. Moo is a range of children's ice creams based on the goodness of milk, with each ice cream containing as much calcium as in 100 ml of milk.

Since 2006, most of our ice creams have been labelled with the values for eight nutrients, including energy, protein, fat and sugars.

After successful test marketing in Belgium and Ireland in 2006, Frusì, our frozen yoghurt brand, has been rolled out in France, Italy, UK and The Netherlands. Frusì contains 110 calories or less per 100ml pot and just 2.4 g of fat. Each pot also provides 50% of the recommended daily allowance of Vitamin C.

Our Solero range products are made with fruit juice and fruit pieces and have a maximum of 99 kilo calories per product.

We have also developed non dairy alternative for ice cream, such as Carte d'Or Soy and Ades ice creams.

Becel/Flora pro-activ – improving heart health

According to the World Health Organization, heart disease is the principal cause of premature death worldwide. Reducing cholesterol is key to minimising the risks of heart disease. Since 2003 we have worked in partnership with the World Heart Federation and national groups to promote heart health. Becel/Flora's Love your Heart campaign focuses on raising awareness and has distributed 4.5 million heart health leaflets to consumers and health professionals. It also offers free cholesterol testing, for example in Greece, where 25 000 people have been tested.



Becel/Flora pro-activ was originally launched as a spread to help people reduce cholesterol levels – it is proven to lower blood cholesterol levels by 10-15%. The healthy heart foods market is growing fast and the pro-activ range has been extended to include milk drinks and yoghurt products too. Between 2003 and 2005 sales of pro-activ grew by 40% and it now reaches over 13 million households.

Added nutrients for health

In 2006, we launched Amaze Brainfood in Turkey, a range of lunchbox milk drinks and cereal snacks which contain one-third of the nutrients children need daily for their mental development. Amaze Brainfood is the result of four years of development, long-term clinical trials and €40 million invested in research. It was developed through collaboration between our product development teams and the Netherlands-based Unilever Food & Health Research Institute. Amaze is now being test-marketed in parts of India.

Our new low-fat spread, Rama Idea!, was launched in 14 countries in 2006. Idea! contains nutrients that support children's mental development, an issue of interest to parents everywhere.

AdeS – our soya-based drink with fruit juices – delivers 35% of the daily recommended intake of vitamins B6 and C, magnesium and calcium. AdeS provides the goodness of soya in a 'great tasting' range of flavours.

Our iodine fortified Annapurna salt has been helping combat iodine deficiency since 1997. Iodine deficiency can contribute towards serious conditions such as mental retardation, low IQ, goitre, and cause still births or congenital abnormalities. Between 2000-2007 the use of iodised salt in Ghana has increased from 28% of the population to around 70%. Annapurna iodised salt is now available in India, Ghana, Nigeria and Malawi.

Hygiene & well-being

Through our brands and partnerships we are committed to making a contribution to the health, hygiene and well-being of individuals around the world.

Our approach

Helping people meet their hygiene needs has always been at the core of our business. Ever since the launch of our Lifebuoy soap, over 100 years ago, we have been making a significant contribution to the health and hygiene of people in both the developed and developing world. More recently, the launch in India of Pureit, our household water purifier, offers consumers a convenient way to provide safe drinking water for their families.



Many of our brands have integrated health, hygiene and well-being into their mission and identity. For example, Lifebuoy continues to lead handwashing and behaviour change projects while improving oral health is a core part of Signal/Pepsodent's mission.

Our Global Health through Hygiene Programme works with our brands and partners such as the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, UNICEF and the World Bank, to improve our technical capability in the area of health and hygiene, particularly in evaluating behaviour change.

Encouraging behaviour change

Around the world billions of people do not wash their hands with soap at the critical times during the day to prevent the spread of germs. Governments, health agencies and non-profit groups campaign to change this, by promoting good health and hygiene habits. However it is difficult to measure the effectiveness of such campaigns. We have been at the forefront of developing a novel method for measuring behaviour change, through our smart sensor technology.

By placing a sensor inside soap bars, researchers can gather accurate data unobtrusively during handwashing trials. To assess our Swasthya Chetna hygiene awareness campaign, we studied the washing habits of 25 households in a rural village in India. We used soap with smart sensors inside to check whether people were washing their hands at the right times to prevent the spread of germs. Our research identified that knowledge and awareness among villagers of the importance of good hygiene habits had

improved, and provided insights to further develop the education programme.

We have used smart sensor soap in a study in Uganda. Working with UNICEF and with local and national government, we set out to ascertain whether school children could act as agents of change within their families to promote handwashing with soap. Results of the study are being analysed and will help assess the potential of this approach to be carried out on a much larger scale around the world.

Independent endorsement

During 2007 the Global Public-Private Partnership for Handwashing with Soap initiative (PPPHW) carried out a study using smart sensor soap, a study funded by the Gates Foundation. A trial in Bangladesh confirmed our smart sensor soap technology to be the most effective in monitoring and evaluating handwashing, and will now be used for further studies. This has been an important endorsement of our technology and the contribution it can make to handwashing campaigns which have the potential to make a real difference to hygiene habits in the world's poorest communities.

Swasthya Chetna hygiene education programme

Since 2002, when Lifebuoy's Swasthya Chetna five-year hygiene campaign was launched in India, the project has reached nearly 44 000 villages and around 100 million people. Our Indian business has invested over US\$5 million in the programme and although we did not achieve our ambitious target of reaching 200 million people by the end of 2007, we intend to continue working towards this aim. We have extended Swasthya Chetna to Bangladesh and Pakistan and are looking to launch a version in Africa.



Lifebuoy's 'glowgerm' demonstration counters the common misconception that 'visibly clean' is 'hygienically clean'. When held under ultra-violet light, glowgerm powder glows on hands washed only with water, providing a dramatic reminder of the need for thorough handwashing with soap.



In Safe Hands

The In Safe Hands process, developed by Lifebuoy and our Marketing Academy, is also built on the insight that behaviour change is needed to achieve health improvements. This initiative involves teams of Unilever marketers teaching campaign-building skills to public sector employees involved in community handwashing programmes. Following workshops in Vietnam and Kenya in 2006, we held a further workshop in Tanzania in 2007, training a total of 240 public sector professionals including representatives from UNICEF, the World Bank and national governments.

Water sanitation & hygiene

We are also working with Water & Sanitation for the Urban Poor (WSUP), a partnership of public and private sector organisations, to look at water, sanitation and hygiene issues in poor urban areas, particularly slums in developing and emerging countries. Together with WSUP and the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, we have designed an approach to hygiene behaviour change which will be tested in a pilot programme in Bangalore, India. This will assess whether improved water and sanitation conditions delivered in conjunction with a hygiene behaviour programme are better than infrastructure improvements alone.

Pureit

Pureit is a unique in-home purifier that provides water that is 'as safe as boiled' without needing electricity or pressurised tap water. Pureit's germkill performance has been tested and verified by a range of scientific, medical and public health institutions, and meets the criteria of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the toughest regulatory agency in the US.

Pureit is the only in-home water purifier that provides this level of safety, protecting against waterborne diseases like diarrhoea, jaundice, typhoid and cholera, without depending on boiling, electricity or pressurised tap water - thereby making safe drinking water more accessible to urban and rural consumers.

One unit costs €32 and has a running cost around half a euro cent per litre, making it a much more affordable option for urban and rural consumers.

Pureit is now available in three states in India: Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

UNICEF and Hindustan Unilever are working together in a project in Southern India to bring safe drinking water to schools and day-care centres in low-income communities. The project has involved the placement and use of Pureit purifiers in a hundred schools, and in a hundred day-care centres covering a total of 15 000 children.

Improving oral health

Oral disease is the second most common illness on the planet. The consequences of poor oral hygiene can begin with discomfort and pain, but can lead to life-threatening illnesses. Around the world, over 1 billion people do not brush their teeth at all, while around 2.5 billion only brush once a day with a fluoride toothpaste. This is a growing problem in developing countries due to low awareness of oral hygiene, poor healthcare and changes in diet. Brushing teeth is important not only for good oral hygiene and general health, but having clean teeth and fresh breath contribute to well-being and personal confidence.



In 2007 we launched a new mission for our oral care brands – to encourage children and their families to brush twice a day, once in the morning and once at night before going to bed. Our brands Signal, Pepsodent and Close-Up are already working in partnership with the FDI World Dental Federation to improve oral health in 38 countries. Our mission will build on this strong foundation.

In Indonesia and China our night brushing campaign has been finding ways to encourage children to brush their teeth before bed. Encouraging tooth-brushing at night is important as this is when the mouth is particularly susceptible to bacterial attack due to lower saliva levels. As with handwashing, changing people's everyday habits is key. We believe that brushing habits that last are best forged between the ages of 4 and 8 and that children learn best by copying their parents. Our campaign therefore focuses on children in this age group as well as their parents. We are using smart sensors in toothbrushes to monitor the effectiveness of our campaign.

Understanding and measuring the impact of our campaigns is key to achieving tangible results – the same smart sensor technology we use to analyse handwashing habits is also used to observe toothbrushing habits accurately and unobtrusively.



Personal hygiene & well-being for all

Looking good and feeling good about life also contribute to overall health. How a person feels about their personal appearance can boost their sense of self-esteem, confidence and well-being. This is true in all societies, rich and poor, in the developed or developing world.

The emotional and psychological impacts of a positive self-image are recognised, although difficult to measure and quantify. Scientists are also starting to link positive emotions to good physical health and longevity.

Increasingly we are looking at how the brands we develop can improve both physical and emotional well-being. We believe taking care of yourself and looking your best should be an option available to everyone. That is why we have developed small-sized packets of products such as shampoo and hair conditioner and developed a low-cost quality toothbrush (the Pepsodent Fighter), to make our products more accessible for low-income consumers.

Available online:

Case study

[Global: Helping the world smile by looking after teeth Health](#)

Download

[Lifebuoy promotes handwashing with soap to improve health in India \(2005\) \(826 KB\)](#)

Why it matters

Our brands can enhance people's health, hygiene and well-being. Yet achieving lasting improvements in health depends on people changing their everyday habits. This is what our hygiene programmes set out to achieve.

The challenge

It has been long understood that simple hygiene habits like washing hands with soap can contribute to the prevention of communicable diseases.

Globally, a lack of basic hygiene causes a wide range of illnesses. One billion people lack access to safe drinking water. Diseases such as diarrhoea lead to around 2 million deaths every year. Poor oral health can lead to gum disease and infection.

Much of this is preventable by incorporating simple habits into everyday routines, such as washing hands with soap before eating and after using the toilet, and brushing teeth day and night with a fluoride toothpaste.

Making good-quality products such as soap and toothpaste available to consumers is the crucial starting point. Yet products alone are often not enough if people do not change their habits. Understanding what triggers improved habits lies at the heart of making sustainable improvements to hygiene.

Therefore, across our range of programmes on handwashing and oral health, the focus is on understanding consumer behaviour and achieving changes in everyday habits.

Our approach

Working with our brands, our Global Health through Hygiene Programme co-ordinates and enhances the impact of our hygiene initiatives around the world.

Global Health through Hygiene Programme

In 2005 we brought together a team of experts from across the business to form our Global Health through Hygiene Programme (GHHP). The GHHP's aim is to co-ordinate and maximise the impact of our hygiene initiatives around the world. The programme takes successful initiatives from one brand or country and tailors them to address consumer hygiene needs elsewhere.

It operates as a cross-functional team led by our GHHP director on behalf of multi-category research. The GHHP's work plan and strategic direction are set by a steering group made up of managers from across our business, representing our regions, brand teams, communications and R&D.

The vision

Unilever has a long and successful history in making hygiene products like soap and home cleaning products. Through our brands we see ourselves playing an important role in contributing to improvements in hygiene among our consumers around the world.

We aim to do this by making the most of the geographic spread of our business and our brand portfolio and also by working in partnership with NGOs, academia and scientific bodies to maximise the effectiveness of our programmes. Our aim is to put in place cost-effective hygiene campaigns that improve hygiene habits, in particular among the world's poorest people.

Implementing our vision

The GHHP is Unilever's one-stop shop for hygiene awareness and authority as it spans the full range of our hygiene brands and activities around the world.

Particular brands lead specific hygiene activities. Unilever brands, such as Lifebuoy soap, Pepsodent toothpaste and Domestos household cleaner, have been implementing hygiene awareness and education programmes for many years. These range from Lifebuoy's Swasthya Chetna rural hygiene awareness programme in India to Domestos' Hygiene for Health campaign in conjunction with the Red Cross.

Each hygiene awareness campaign has different approaches, audiences and ways of engaging with consumers' emotions in relation to hygiene. The GHHP's role is to identify good examples of health and hygiene programmes

from around Unilever and enable others in the company to learn from them and adapt them for their own markets.

The GHHP also co-ordinates our work with international partners such as the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine and the International Scientific Forum on Home Hygiene. We work with these partners on issues such as water, sanitation and hygiene. Projects often focus on finding ways of measuring and evaluating the difference that hygiene campaigns can make in changing people's behaviour.

Working with others

Both at local level and through global initiatives, we work with our partners to deliver programmes to improve health and hygiene practice and awareness.

Working with others to improve hygiene practices around the world

We work through partnerships with governments, non-profit organisations and community groups to find long-term solutions to health and hygiene challenges around the world.

These are examples of some of our most recent initiatives.

Promoting oral health

We have teamed up with the FDI World Dental Federation – which represents around 1 million dentists – in an ambitious dental health initiative. The aim of the campaign is simple: to help stop oral health ailments before they start.

Brushing twice daily with a fluoride toothpaste may be routine practice to some, but the reality is that for many people an oral health routine is not part of everyday activity. The partnership aims to encourage behaviour change by highlighting that good oral care is essential for general health and well-being.

As part of awareness-raising, all our toothpaste packs carry essential oral health messages. Similar messages appear in our TV and print advertising. Our efforts are given added professional weight by the FDI, which has agreed to include its logo and supportive statements as part of our joint communications drive.

"Unilever and FDI share the same global goal to promote oral health by developing and implementing oral health initiatives, which are sustainable and appropriate," according to Dr Habib Benzian, FDI's World Dental Development and Health Promotion Director.

Saving lives through handwashing

Our long-standing Lifebuoy Swasthya Chetna programme has been raising awareness of the importance of handwashing with soap in India since 2002. Working in partnership with health educators, teachers, community leaders and government agencies, Swasthya Chetna has been delivering basic health and hygiene education to rural areas. The initiative has targeted the eight Indian states where deaths from diarrhoeal illnesses are the highest, and soap sales



are lowest. The project has reached around 100 million people in nearly 44 000 villages.

Our Indian business has invested over \$5 million in the programme and although we did not achieve our ambitious target of reaching 200 million people by the end of 2007, we intend to continue working towards this aim.

The success of the initiative was acknowledged by the Indian government when its postal department released a special 'first day cover' for a stamp promoting World Health Day. This is the first time that a brand has featured on a postage stamp cover.

Also in partnership with UNICEF we have extended Swasthya Chetna to Bangladesh and Pakistan and are looking to launch a version in Africa.

We are also working on a three-year handwashing campaign in Nigeria. Unilever Nigeria has pledged its support for a campaign managed by UNICEF, to alert a million school children to the dangers of poor hygiene. The campaign aims to improve awareness of germs and gastro-intestinal diseases that are passed on through a lack of proper handwashing. By the end of 2007, children at 141 schools had benefited from hygiene awareness training and improved water and sanitation facilities. The campaign aims to reach 222 schools by the end of 2008. Communicating these messages to children also has a wider impact as the children pass the hygiene message on to their families. We estimate the campaign's messages have reached over two million people this way.

We have also been working in Nigeria with Sightsavers International and Sokoko State Ministry of Health to help prevent blindness caused by trachoma, a disease whose spread can be countered by washing hands and faces with soap.

Water & Sanitation for the Urban Poor

We are working with Water and Sanitation for the Urban Poor (WSUP) to look at hygiene issues among people living in urban slums. We have developed a hygiene behaviour change programme to pilot in Bangalore, India. This will assess whether improved water and sanitation conditions delivered in conjunction with a hygiene behaviour programme are better than infrastructure improvements alone.

The project has been launched in partnership with the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine and is tailored to enhance the benefits of improved access to water and sanitation in urban slum communities.

As well as building on Unilever's ongoing work in motivational behaviour change and handwashing with soap, the project will address household water storage and usage issues, and tackle the cleanliness of latrines and sanitation facilities.

The WSUP initiative coincides with the International Year of Sanitation 2008. Results from the pilot will be used to develop a tool for use across WSUP projects.

The science of home hygiene

The International Scientific Forum on Home Hygiene (IFH) promotes the role of home hygiene in preventing infectious disease. This non-commercial foundation is funded by several organisations, including Unilever, and is guided by an independent scientific advisory board. It brings together scientists and healthcare professionals to better understand risk, promote further research and spread good practice.

During 2006, the Forum published research on the hygiene issues around household water storage in developed and developing countries. It also published reports on MRSA (the bacterium from the Staphylococcus aureus family) and its significance in homes and communities, and the importance of disinfecting dishcloths. Bleach is particularly effective in killing micro-organisms. Like the IFH, our Domestos brand is committed to improving general hygiene and health standards in communities around the world.

Available online:

Case study

[Nigeria: Promoting health & hygiene](#)

More health case studies

[Health](#)

Speeches

[Business as a partner in reaching the Millennium Development Goals](#)

People profiles

[Stewart Granger – United Kingdom](#)

Download

[Lifebuoy promotes handwashing with soap to improve health in India \(2005\) \(826 KB\)](#)