

Development and delivery of the *Faces of Dignity* face washing intervention for the Stronger-SAFE trachoma trial

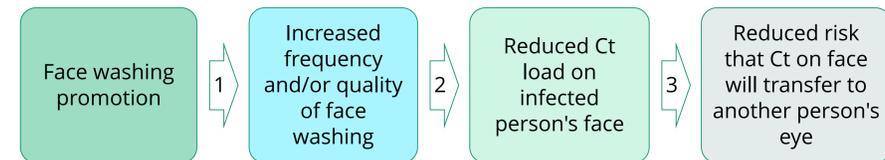
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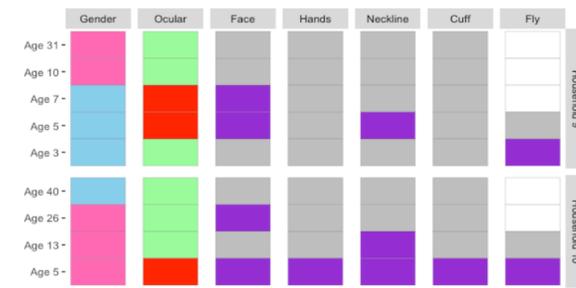
Trachoma & the Stronger-SAFE Trial

- Trachoma is an eye disease caused by *Chlamydia trachomatis* (Ct) bacteria
- Stronger-SAFE is a four-arm cluster-randomised trial to test whether enhanced azithromycin treatment (two doses, two weeks apart) combined with targeted transmission-interrupting strategies (face washing and fly control) can more effectively eliminate trachoma than current approaches.
- The trial is taking place in the West Arsi Zone in rural Oromia, Ethiopia.

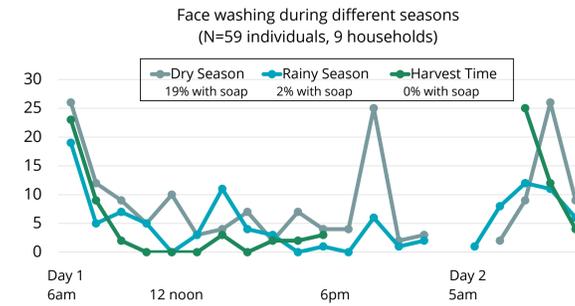
Face washing Theory of Change



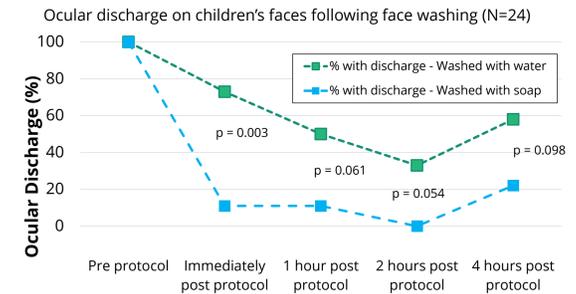
Preliminary Studies



Chlamydia trachomatis mapping study¹
Ct-positive extra-ocular (purple) swabs suggest Ct transmission is via faces, fingers, fomites & flies



Formative research: seasonality and behaviour²
Overnight observation for 27 hrs in three seasons reveals faces are mainly washed in the morning, without soap



Pilot study: face washing & soap use³
Soap removes ocular discharge from children's faces more effectively than just water

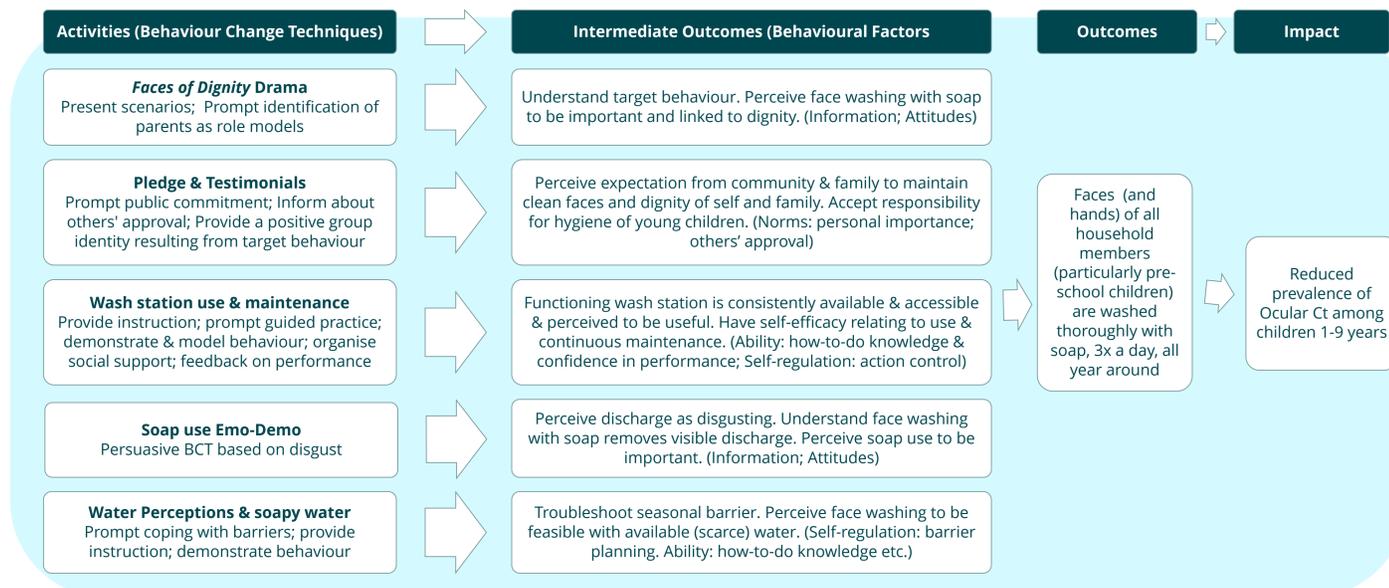
Intervention Development

- Use information from preliminary studies to define target behaviour
- Choose "umbrella" concept to tie intervention content together
 - Dignity:** Narrative testing found face washing is central to maintaining dignity, which leads to respect & affiliation
- Select Behaviour Change Techniques to address multiple behavioural factors
- Develop intervention content iteratively, according to creative brief
- Create final Theory of Change for the intervention



"Clean face is attractive, it's also dignifying."

Theory of Change



Intervention Delivery

- Feb-Apr 2022, with dry & rainy season reinforcement (2022 & 2023).
- Delivery to 1664 households in 34 "clusters".
- Process evaluation:** implementation records & unannounced "spot checks" of delivery; participant exit interviews; FGDs.
 - My family cannot wash our faces with soap because it uses too much water:* 73.5% control, 35.3% intervention; $P < 0.001$.
- Outcomes evaluation:** structured observation of face washing behaviour in 68 clusters at 3 months and 36 months.
- The trial is ongoing.



Wash station with faucet & soapy water to create an enabling environment



Community Event (N=34), Family Forum 1 (5xHHs, N=309), Family Forum 2 (5xHHs, N=311), House Call 1 (N=1495), House Call 2 (N=1491), Seasonal Events (10xHHs, dry & rainy season)

- Last A et al. Detecting extra-ocular Chlamydia trachomatis in a trachoma-endemic community in Ethiopia: Identifying potential routes of transmission. *PLoS Negl Trop Dis.* 2020 Mar 4;14(3).
- Greenland K et al. Seasonal variation in water use for hygiene in Oromia, Ethiopia, and its implications for trachoma control: An intensive observational study. *PLoS Negl Trop Dis.* 2022 May 13;16(5).
- Czerniewska A et al. Comparison of Face Washing and Face Wiping Methods for Trachoma Control: A Pilot Study. *Am J Trop Med Hyg.* 2020 Apr;102(4).