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## **School Sanitation and Hygiene Education Symposium The Way Forward : Construction is not Enough!**

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### **CEI EXPERIENCE IN CROSSING THE GAP IN SCHOOL SANITATION AND HYGIENE EDUCATION : CASE STUDY OF MABLE PARISH NKOMA SUB- COUNTY KAMWENGE DISTRICT WESTERN UGANDA**

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Community Empowerment Initiative (CEI) is a local NGO in western Uganda. CEI's mission is to empower the marginalized and needy among the community to come up with sustainable, low cost and gender responsive solutions to their problems and the vision of improving the living conditions of the community through implementation of long term sustainable programmes. CEI deals with water supply and sanitation projects in the districts of Kabarole, Kamwenge and Kyenjojo in western Uganda.

The environmental sanitation status in western Uganda falls below the expected standards. Sanitation related diseases are the greatest cause of illness and death among the population. Recent studies show that sanitation related diseases like malaria, cholera, diarrhea and intestinal worms but to mention a few are among the top killer diseases in our area of operation.

Uganda government targets 100% water and sanitation coverage by the year 2015, the current national coverage figure is 58% water and sanitation in Uganda. The government of Uganda is promoting universal primary education where by donors have injected substantial funds. The current enrollment stands at 96%. This increase in enrollment puts considerable stress on school sanitation. On average the pupil stance ratio stands at 1:100 as opposed to the recommended 1:40 as well as the lack of adequate water to ensure proper hygiene and sanitation in schools. This issue of inadequacy especially affects the girl child. This is more so for the girls in upper primary schools who need private wash rooms and adequate supply of water especially during menstruation period. But these girls are more educated on their personal hygiene and the boys are not catered for, example girls are being checked weekly by senior women teachers but no provision for boys, this is a gap which needs to be addressed.

Nationally there are many players involved in WES sector but with the government policy of privatization and decentralization, most funds are channeled through districts and the districts in turn tender out all the works. Construction of hard ware facilities is given more emphasis at the expense of the soft ware aspects of the mobilization in schools, hygiene behavior promotion in software requires more time than hard ware activities. This scenario has left facilities poorly maintained and in the worst case scenario misused and vandalized. The difference between hardware and software activities are; Hardware activities are these activities which involves construction work and software activities are these activities involving hygiene and sanitation

activities like trainings (seminars and workshops), putting up hygiene and sanitation demonstration facilities and O and M activities. The schools are partly involved in hygiene and sanitation during classes this is evidenced by CEI assessment in the schools where we found lessons put in their curriculum. These lessons are more taught on theory than practical this is spelt out that girls in schools are enforced to practice personal hygiene as they are taught in class and they are checked weekly by senior women teachers but there are no provision for boys in those schools so this is already a gap. The NGO voice to fill this gap can be to the Net work, put one voice through the NGO Net work known as Uganda water sanitation NGO Net work (UWASNET).

This is an NGO in Uganda which Co-ordinates all WES NGOs. When the NGOs give one voice through this organization it can be heard by the government which will advise the ministry of education to adjust the curriculum.

CEI in collaboration with UNICEF and HEWASA have installed rain water tanks in the primary schools of Mabale parish Nkoma sub-county Kamwenge district western Uganda. The funds for soft ware were only limited to only installation of rainy water tanks in those primary schools. And these tanks again were still not mentained after some time, this was also a gap.

The intervention for CEI itself was to fill some manageable gaps on software side where CEI hygiene promoters have carried an assessment in those schools to get the data on SSHE and all the above rose from the assessment. Then CEI invited school teachers to be trained on various school sanitation and hygiene activities which include, operation and mentainance of the water tanks on practical lessons, latrines and washing facilities. The practical lessons were done in one of the schools where technical persons were hired to come and demonstrate to all teachers of schools in the area after, they went back to do it in their schools. CEI has carried the follow up activity to those schools and teachers have practiced what they were trained for example water and sanitation facilities which were not mentained at first are now well mentained.

### **CEI opportunities to improve on SSHE.**

To cover the gap in the hygiene promotion, CEI secured funds from an international donor based in Netherlands known as **SIMAVI** to implement community water and sanitation in that same parish. In this process CEI has made sure that every hygiene and sanitation trainings of the community, school teachers do attend so that they can pass the information to the pupils they teach in order for the pupils to practice proper hygiene and sanitation behaviours.

Through Uganda Water and Sanitation NGO Network (UWASNET) all the NGOs in WES can give our one voice to the government of Uganda which will advise the Ministry to adjust the teachers curriculum.

Another opportunity is that more efforts are needed to promote SSHE since other developmental partners are willing to contribute towards the process.

### **Lessons learnt**

- Unless separate resources for SSHE are mobilized, there won't be abig improvement on SSHE. If the separate resource is mobilized for SSHE there will be tangible results because every body will evaluate the investment and the results.

- Unless strong partnership/network is created among NGOs and the government sharing common interest there won't be improvement on SSHE, there is need for joint planning with all stake holders.

### **Recommendations**

- Special trainings to teachers on how to train the pupils to practice the use of placed structures like water taps, constructed pit latrines and maintaining them (T.O.T training) in the long run pupils are the ambassadors to their homesteads they come from.
- There is a bit need to train the pupils on how to use and maintain the sanitation facilities put in place. This can done more easily by emphasizing child to child approach through sanitation committees at schools or at village level.
- Development partners should increase their support to the organizations they support.
- Development partners should build the capacity for the organization they support.
- Development partners should emphasize separate budget lines and activities for schools in case they are funding both community and institutional intervention.
- Implementers should share the experiences on SSHE among themselves.

### **Conclusion**

Promotion of SSHE in all institution of learning present a special opportunity for sanitation promotion, to ensure these institutions like primary, secondary and tertiary have adequate SSHE, special attention should be given to primary schools who have young children.