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Notes & News

May 2007



Plan International constructed school toilets and handwash facilities in Lima, Peru.
Photo: R. Rodriguez, Plan International

Note from the editors

This new issue of **Notes & News** focuses on the: Global Information Sharing Project (GISP). The project as launched in 2006 by UNICEF and IRC aims to provide worldwide stakeholders with high quality essential information for WASH in schools programming. One of the products of the project has been the documentation of case studies on interesting WASH in schools experiences.

The article on "Scaling-up considerations: learning from cases collected through the Global Information Sharing Project", highlights quality and sustainability issues that are essential for scaling-up and summarises crucial elements from the different case studies. The article on the work of UNICEF Malawi describes the current shift to an approach in which the community and the schools take the lead in constructing and management of facilities. This new approach focuses on partnerships and local institutions and appears to be cheaper, more sustainable and has an empowering effect on the community. The article after this entitled "girl-friendly latrines for Ghanaian schoolgirls" focuses specifically on the needs for appropriate sanitation facilities for adolescent girls. This issue also includes a summary and provides web links to all twelve case studies produced in the framework of the Global Information Sharing Project.

We hope that this new issue of **Notes & News** on WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) in Schools will serve as a motivation and inspiration for new initiatives and developments to help all those school children worldwide who still lack appropriate knowledge and possibilities to practice good hygiene habits as well as to provide them with facilities for water, sanitation and handwashing that allow them to practice all those hygiene habits that will benefit their overall health conditions.

What is happening worldwide

A collection of case studies was drafted to show the different aspects of school water, sanitation and hygiene in different settings. The case studies focus on four different themes:

1. planning and management
2. actions in the school and teaching-learning
3. technology/designs, and

4. scaling up or expanding the program while retaining its quality.

While brief introductions to the case studies are given below, the full texts can be found at <http://www.schools.watsan.net/> or obtained through Ms. Ingeborg Krukkert, webmanager WASH in Schools, IRC, Delft, the Netherlands, e-mail: washinschools@irc.nl.



The WASH in Schools *Notes & News* is part of the SSHE thematic group work and will be published twice a year. WASH in Schools *Notes & News* aims to provide a channel for the dissemination of good practices, current information, knowledge and experiences to all stakeholders that carry out activities in school sanitation and hygiene education.



Panning and management

1. *Management and Capacity: Scaling up SSHE in Alwar District, Rajasthan, India*

The Alwar experience has provided some significant lessons, such as the financial advantage of sharing costs among organizations; using resources that are available from as many organizations as possible; encouraging peer interaction and others.

2. *Seven lead institutions in learning and advocacy partnership*

The challenges of WASH in schools in Kenya were tackled in partnership with seven key organizations. Together, they completed a successful nine-month learning and advocacy pilot project in three areas of Kenya. The pilot demonstrated that partnership at the national level on a concrete topic provides a practical approach to resource mobilization and project implementation. It triggered a follow-up by the Kenyan Government to launch a coordination body for the national school sanitation program and to increase investments.

3. *The Malawian process to community based school sanitation*

Refer to article in this issue of N&N starting on page 5.

4. *Building for life – Senegal: a holistic approach towards WASH in schools*

UNICEF Senegal works with a 'Building for Life' package, which addresses the problems of water and sanitation, and also works to revitalize the whole learning environment. In this setting, water, sanitation and hygiene in schools is planned as part of a large, integrated package for educational renewal, as well as a program in its own right for sustained change in hygiene behaviours.

Actions in the school and teaching-learning

5. *Improving teaching: health education in Pakistan*

Can programs be effective when they focus on capacity building and educational methodologies alone? What can be expected from such interventions? This action research program, undertaken in Pakistan, tried to answer these questions using a range of monitoring and research tools.

6. *Children's health clubs in schools: opportunities and risks*

Many school programmes for water, sanitation and hygiene have organized special children's groups. This paper discusses some of the benefits and risks of these groups.

7. *CHAST (Children's Hygiene and Sanitation Training) in Somalia*

CHAST is implemented at the same time as construction of school buildings and water and sanitation facilities.

When CHAST comes to the schools, community facilitators also take up PHAST (Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation) activities with the adults in the community. It has usually been these field workers who have facilitated CHAST in the classroom.

Technology/designs

8. *Solar-heated showers at the Bolivian highlands*

The Bolivian highlands are chilly for most of the time. Water in gravity-fed systems and streams has a very low temperature making that people prefer not to wash themselves. UNICEF Bolivia has developed solar-heated showers at schools to allow school children to bath in warm water. Other organizations in Bolivia have also started to construct the solar heated showers using a similar design.

9. *Girl-friendly toilets for schoolgirls*

At school, girls are faced with inadequate water for washing, lack of soap, no privacy, non-functioning or inadequate toilets and no disposal facilities. The NGO, Plan Ghana being acutely aware of this, took up the challenge and decided to develop a model 'girl-friendly latrine'. Refer to article on page 6.

Scaling up or expanding the programme while retaining its quality

10. *School water programs work: handwashing with soap remains a big problem*

In more than 80% of the programme schools that participated in a six-country WASH in schools pilot study from 2000-2004, the facilities to provide water were still available and in working order 12 to 18 months after the project had finished. The availability and use of soap remains a major problem.

11. *Learning lessons on sustainability in Bangladesh*

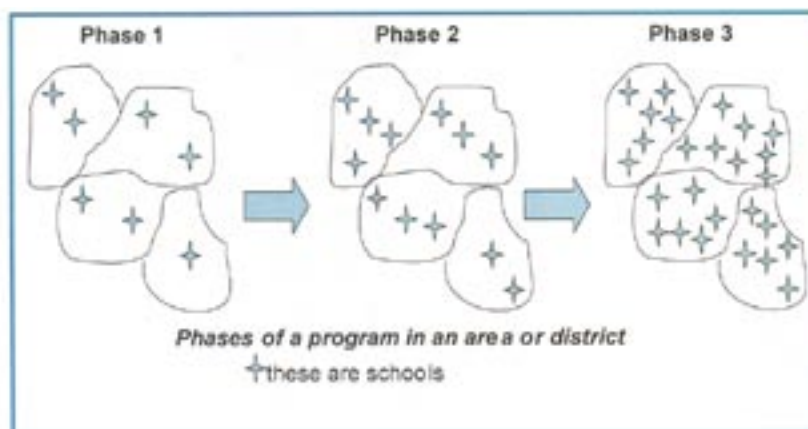
Since 1992, UNICEF Bangladesh has supported school programmes through Public Health and Education departments. While there have been notable achievements on a project basis, the sustainability is in doubt. The programme is now part of a sector-wide approach in education and providing the right conditions for sustainability.

12. *Management and monitoring of SSHE in Tamil Nadu, India*

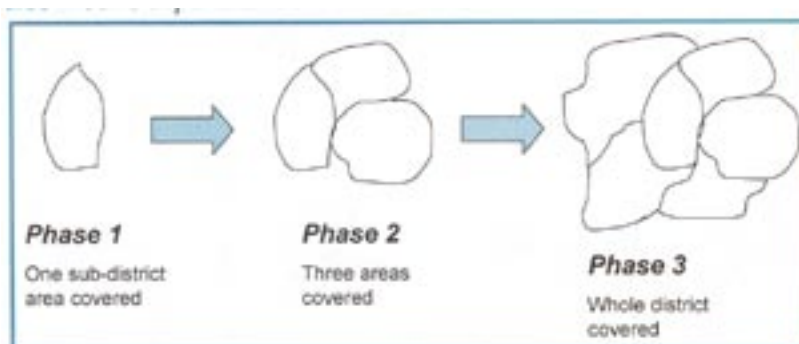
The strategy was to use monitoring and the collection of data as a tool for planning and managing the scaling up of SSHE, involving government staff. Only a limited amount of data on the most important components was collected so that data could be easily manageable. For this, an initial survey was made of each school investigating only five basic indicators.

Scaling up considerations: learning from cases collected through the Global Information Sharing Project

SCALING UP means high proportion covered in an area



SCALING UP also means expansion to other areas



It is fairly easy to ensure quality of WASH programs in a few schools. However, it is far more difficult to maintain the quality in hundreds or thousands or even more schools. The basic problem is sustainability. Facilities are not maintained or used as intended. They gradually become dirty or brake down, stop operating or fall into disuse. In addition to maintenance and continued operation, sustaining behaviours is another challenge. In particular, handwashing with soap after using the toilet and before eating must be done on a regular basis to provide a strong positive health advantage for school children. Ensuring continued operations and hygiene practices requires some basic organization in the school: trained teachers, actively participating children and a management committee or group of involved parents.

In the following piece the global sharing case studies are highlighted in reference to scaling up (For the full case studies refer to <http://www.schools.watsan.net>).

Case studies show for the construction of facilities that:

- When local builders and parents and children are involved, with a good design adapted to children,

support and a clear manual, then toilets can be built quickly, with quality and at a reasonable price. The Malawi case study shows that this local approach was preferred above having centrally-tendered construction work. In this case, planning with community members and teacher training come early in the project cycle.

- Addressing local needs may lead to new or improved technologies. The case study from Bolivia shows how solar heating was developed to warm water for children in very cold locations.
- One half the girls 13 years of age may be menstruating. The case studies with information from Ghana and Kenya tailored for the needs of those adolescent girls.

Scaling up the software side through institutional commitment and cooperation:

- National mobilization in Kenya provided an example of how to develop knowledge about the current situation in schools and commitment to improve this. The mobilization did not require large amounts of money, but joint action among ministries, UNICEF and civil society organizations.

- Senegal and India (specifically Alwar district) showed how WASH in schools can be supported through other, ongoing programs such as universal primary education and national sanitation programs.
- Non-governmental organizations work in mobilization, training and implementation of WASH in school projects in many areas. The question on how the NGOs can support longer-term government-led efforts to scaling up has not been addressed in the case studies.

Scaling up the software side through capacity development:

- Capacity development means more than training. The Indian case studies show how capacity development is carried out in orientations (and repeating orientations) for educational supervisors, in study tours and visits to more advanced schools, blocks and districts. Abilities and motivation can be improved by undertaking joint activities such as joint planning (preparing district plans), experiments/pilots carried out with partners, and joint assessments.
- In most of the case studies, at least one teacher, the head-teacher, a community or school management group, children's clubs received special orientation or training. A UNICEF-initiated six-country study found that the frequent transfer of trained teachers was a significant problem. While this might be considered a limitation, if the transfers are within a district, this might help with scaling up the programme in the district.
- Projects often use 'cascade training' where, a central group may train teacher trainers, who then train selected teachers who sometimes after that are expected to train other teachers. Professionals note that the quality of the training decreases dramatically further down the cascade. The six-country study mentioned a useful alternative to cascade training: setting up full-time, mobile training teams. Another approach was strongly advocated in the Alwar District in India. This is to provide refresher orientation each year for education supervisors and teachers. No matter which approaches are selected, financial decisions must be taken early in the planning process, for example about how much training will cost and how to cover this.
- Most of the case studies emphasized the importance of participatory processes in training, learning and teaching. This included teachers making plans during their own training for organizing school children for use and maintenance, and activity plans for children's health clubs. The child-to-child program in Pakistan emphasized that this is not a subject for rote-memorization, but for reflection, trials, joint problem solving focusing on real life issues.

One element that appeared in the case studies is the importance of the intermediate level (county, district, province) of leaders (educators, engineers, local government professionals, and so on). The success or failure of scaling up may be determined at this intermediate level. At these levels where thousands or tens of thousands of schools are targeted, UNICEF can, at most, provide strategic inputs. The planning and execution of effective training/orientation, monitoring and supervision, education materials, local financing for recurring expenditures are at the heart of the large-scale effort. Visits are also needed to monitor, supervise and re-orient each school with return visits periodically to the school for follow up.

Three ways to organise management at the intermediate levels are:

- Management by current education staff: In this strategy, WASH in schools is integrated completely into current education structures. A challenge, however, is that it then must compete with other educational reforms such as UPE or teacher upgrading. Teachers may not be motivated to take on more work as required by WASH in schools. It may get lost or may take longer to implement on a large scale.
- Expand the roles of local institutions already in place: In this approach, supervision and training would be the responsibility of staff of currently active institutions such as education staff, NGOs field workers, adult literacy groups, and rural development officers. They could organise visits to and monitoring of the schools. However some form of financial or travel support is probably needed to ensure that periodic meetings are held and that supervisory visits are made to schools. These small payments may be difficult to administer. Furthermore, personnel from other government departments or NGOs may not be accepted as WASH supervisors by school staff.
- Hire a staff member or consultant for every few blocks: This option means that staff or consultants would be hired to manage the program as it expands, one or more per district or sub-district area. This approach ensures rapid initial expansion of WASH in schools... a fast start to scaling up. However, it is probably not sustainable beyond the project's lifespan in each area, and it may be too costly overall.

Many of the obvious management solutions to scaling up with quality have potential imperfections. In general, more tracking and assessment of program experience is needed. In the particular situation, careful calculations of costs and estimates of available human/institutional resources are needed, together with serious local consultations before a final decision is made.

Community based WASH in schools in Malawi

The School Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion programme in Malawi is currently shifting to an approach in which the community and the schools take the lead in constructing and management of facilities. This new approach, which focuses on partnerships and local institutions, appears to be cheaper, more sustainable and has an empowering effect on the community.

Background

The original programme for rural primary schools started in 2002 and focuses on improving handwash habits, proper use of latrines, and safe handling/ storage of drinking water. The rural schools have, on the average, 600 pupils for whom a minimum school facilities package consists of four latrines for girls, four latrines for boys, one latrine each for female and male teachers, one urinal each for girls and boys and one handwashing facility each for girls and boys. Containers are provided for safe handling and storage of drinking water. Originally, a pilot project was started at 30 schools in three districts. The schools participating in the pilot were selected by the district governments and the construction work was carried out by external contractors with the assistance of the community.

An evaluation of this pilot project in 2004, showed that improvements in the set-up should be made:

- Costs needed to be reduced.
- Schools and communities were not sufficiently involved in selecting the designs, in construction and the management of the facilities.
- Children were not involved in planning and education on how to use the new facilities was not adequate.

In response to the evaluation, a couple of adjustments were made:

1. Easy-to-read Manual. The original catalogue with the technical designs for latrines, urinals and the handwashing facilities was too technical and too complicated for local use. An anthropologist was hired to reshape the manual to help communities to make informed choices, to guide them in the construction of the facilities and for monitoring and supervision during the construction process. The manual was finalised after extensive field-testing with people in the pilot districts.



2. Fibre Glass Moulds. The introduction of fibre glass moulds were produced as the concrete rings for the walls of the latrine pits. These moulds avoid latrines with wrong dimensions and reduce the work load: they ensure quick and good results and they are light so they can even be transported on the back of a bicycle or animal.

3. Compensation for all involved. There had been an assumption that community members had free time to contribute in unskilled labour. This assumption proved unrealistic: e.g. women have to walk long distances to fetch water in times of drought. The programme has been adjusted so that now everybody who is doing work gets a small financial compensation. Local skilled builders do not volunteer. They now get a fee, which induces them to come back on time, to earn their income.

Involving the community in this way has created commitment and responsibility for the construction. Using the manual and clear contracts, everybody knows what money is available and being spent and improves transparency.

4. Changing role of the District Committee. The original pilot project was managed at the district level without actively involving the community. Now, the role of the district management staff has changed. They are process-oriented, rather than giving directions and instructions. They build the capacity of the communities, strengthen the groups at local level, support the creation and functioning of School Management Committees, PTAs (Parent Teacher Associations) and children's hygiene clubs. It is the community who makes the final decisions, while the district staff helps the communities and guides them into decisions. This approach works better and faster and is about real empowerment.

UNICEF supports capacity development of district staff and works to motivate them for their new roles. They organise regular meetings at the District Offices to discuss and share their best practices. Also District-to-District support was introduced in which districts with certain expertise travel to other districts to advise and teach others on technologies or participatory methodologies.

Results of the new approach

With the new programme approach the costs of school facilities has reduced to one-third of the original cost. The money that is saved is injected back into the community by providing training and is used for the

expansion of the programme. The programme has now extended its activities to a total of 22 districts, covering 450 schools and targeting to 600 schools covered by end 2007. This is a small but significant proportion of the more than 4000 primary schools in Malawi.

Girl-friendly latrines for Ghanaian schoolgirls

Plan International, Accra Ghana. For further information contact Water and Sanitation Adviser Lorretta Roberts at: lorretta.roberts@plan-international.org

The challenge of building for adolescent girls

Over the past couple of years there has been more awareness created towards catering for young women's needs during menstruation. Not only at home or when they are away from home but also at schools.

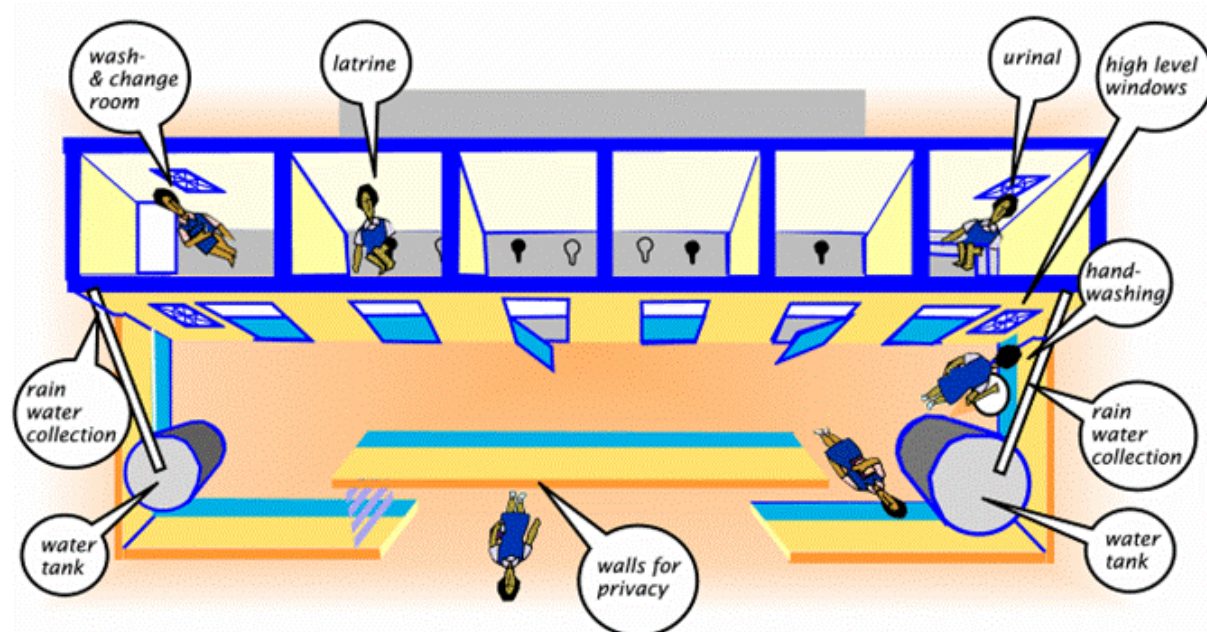
Adolescent girls are often absent from school due to menstruation related issues. At school, menstruating girls are faced with poor facilities – inadequate water for washing, lack of soap, no privacy, non-functioning or inadequate toilets and no disposal facilities.

Fifteen percent of the girls between 15 and 18 years, report to be absent due to cramping abdominal pains experienced during, and sometimes just before, their monthly period (also called dysmenorrhoea). Those who choose to attend while menstruating are often embarrassed by their own body odour caused by

using the same cloth or rag without changing and washing, for which they are teased by their class mates. The accompanying abdominal cramps, headaches and fatigue coupled with poor facilities and lack of counselling leads to monthly absenteeism making that a girl misses 10-20% of her school days. Often this absenteeism is seen as a first step into completely dropping out of school.

During all times, adolescent girls would need facilities that provide privacy when they use them but at the same time are located at secure places to avoid risk of rape or harassment inside the facilities or access of dangerous animals.

As a result of the difficult position of adolescent school girls, Plan Ghana has decided to develop, so called, **girl-friendly latrines**.



© Drawing by Jaap Zomerplaag

The design

The latrines facilitate the girls in several ways:

- There is a **wash-room** that the girls can use to change or clean themselves in privacy during menstruation and the other times of the month.
- The latrine is specially designed to meet the needs of the adolescent girl in that **the squat holes are slightly bigger** to cater for the girls physiological urge of urinating whilst defecating.
- There is a urinal with a door to **allow for privacy** when they urinate and four alternating-pit latrines within each unit.
- **Rain water** is being collected from the roof of the sanitary unit which makes it completely self-sufficient.
- **Water and soap** is provided within the wash-room and at the exit of the urinal.

The design process includes two phases. First of all, groups consultations were organized to ask the girls about their needs and ideas on how to accomplish their needs. On the basis of this consultation the above design has been developed.

The costs of building the pilot building latrine was approximately \$3500/each.

Hygiene education

Currently Plan Ghana is working on the development of effective education on menstrual hygiene and management to supplement the availability of the girl-friendly latrines.

The Learning goals are to teach the girls that:

1. Menstrual blood is not dirty or unhygienic and unclean. It is simply blood and tissue sloughed from lining of the uterus.
2. The odour during menstruation is caused by bad hygiene of the genitals.



A pilot girl-friendly sanitary unit in Asesewa, Ghana.
Photo: A. Mooijman for Plan International

3. Several personal hygiene skills for menstrual hygiene: e.g. (a) taking a daily bath during menstruation and (b) using hygienic material like sterile pads as well as (c) cleaning of genitals and wiping from front to back after using toilet to avoid bladder and kidney infections.

Lessons learned

During 2006, ten pilot-real scale sanitary units are being tested in three different regions of Ghana. These pilot models will be evaluated with the support of the girls. If needed, the designs will be improved. The first signals are that the girl-friendly latrines are a success. The Government of Ghana is now planning to introduce this design in the whole of Ghana.

“And... the school boys were somewhat jealous about the girl-friendly latrine... therefore Plan Ghana has decided to call their traditional design from now on: boy-friendly latrine..”

News

Directory of Support to School Health and Nutrition Programmes

The updated version of the directory provides an analysis of information gathered from 38 organisations active in this field and serves to highlight areas of ongoing concern as well as emerging trends and issues since the Directory was last updated in 2000.

It is available in hard copy and can be downloaded from the web: <http://www.schoolsandhealth.org/download-documents.htm>

Save the Children/USA's annual SHN (School Health and Nutrition) Newsletters

The most recent and older issues of this SHN newsletter have also all been posted on the international school health website: <http://www.schoolsandhealth.org/download-documents.htm>.

Schistosomiasis: school eradication research in Tanzania

Teachers in two primary schools in northern Tanzania have been playing a role in the eradication of schistosomiasis. A participatory action research project was launched to create enabling environments for the schoolchildren and other community members to adapt practices relevant for reducing the transmission of schistosomiasis. Researchers realised that they had to focus more on the teachers and change their perspective from one of “helping the research team” to become full partners in the research. Teachers helped to develop a curriculum for schistosomiasis education and making household sanitation surveys part of school activities. This was translated into steps to create better links between the school and the community, and actions taken by community members to create safe swimming places.

For more information contact: Skaraborg Institute for Research and Development, Sweden, Solveig, e-mail: Freudenthal@sida.se

South Africa: education’s safe sanitation drive hits landmark

The KwaZulu Natal Department of Education has hit a landmark of building over 7000 toilets in its safe sanitation project for schools which have no toilet facilities, or whose facilities have collapsed. In 2004, 500 schools in KwaZulu Natal either had no toilets or the existing pit latrines had caved in. In an effort to address this unsafe situation, KwaZulu Natal MEC (Member of the Executive Council) for Education - Ms. Ina Cronje said over 7000 toilets had been built for the province’s schools in less than three years.

The MEC brought a site visit and said it was dehumanising for learners or educators to have to use unhygienic toilets. During her visit, she opened new

toilets which were built according to the national building regulations and with improved structures compared with the previous ones. MEC Cronje said decent toilets formed part of human dignity and the department would pull out all the stops to provide clean and safe ablution facilities. “Our children and teachers spend most of their time at their respective schools and some of them avoid using school toilets because of their unhygienic conditions which can affect their health,” she said. The condition of some toilets, she said, could affect learners’ ability to concentrate in class. In conjunction with the Office of the Premier former soldiers had been trained to build toilets for schools as part of the “Monument of Peace” project. The department also trained and used female and youth contractors, to fast track the building project at the schools.

The building of new toilets will continue until the department has replaced all old, inadequate and unsafe toilets at its 6 000 schools.

Source: <http://allafrica.com/stories/200702211077.html>



School toilets. Photo: A. Mooijman for Plan International

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The WASH in Schools Notes & News will be distributed free of charge and is being financed by IRC and UNICEF. WASH in Schools Notes & News will be distributed through mail or e-mail. In addition, all editions will also be made available on the school sanitation and hygiene education web site: <http://www.schools.watsan.net>.

To subscribe please contact IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre

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