

Notes & News

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Youth in Nicaragua did design their own teaching materials based on existing expensive materials, see also page 2. Photo: by A. Mooijman

Note from the editors

It has been widely recognised that the key to the success of WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) in schools has been the active involvement and participation of children throughout its programme and action cycle. Therefore, this issue of **Notes and News** focuses on: **Child and Youth participation**.

The article on "Considerations on children's hygiene clubs and other ways of active participation", describes why participation is important and what can be done to enhance youth and child participation for WASH in schools. UNICEF Ethiopia describe how they assessed what children really want for WASH in schools. A secondary school girl from Uganda has written an essay on how she and her peers did undertake action to make their school and community hygienic.

Last but not least, news from around the world shows how many children, adults and organisations are working on the improvement of WASH conditions in schools.

Keep up the good work!

The editors

Considerations on children's hygiene clubs and other ways of active participation

For most WASH in schools activities, children actively participate because they are educated through their teachers in school and because they are involved in youth hygiene clubs within and outside the school.

Children's hygiene clubs are established as a way to get school children actively involved as advocates for a hygienic school and community. Clubs also allow

teachers to experiment without the constraints of a classroom setting. For example, out-of-school activities are easier for community walks, observation, small experiments, and discussion groups as well as to develop together with the children: songs, dances and plays on health and hygiene themes which they can perform for their peers, parents and community¹.

1. More on participatory learning can be found in the IRC-publications: "Life skills-based hygiene education", IRC, Delft, the Netherlands, 2004, available at: <http://www.irc.nl/page/10453> and "The Joy of Learning", IRC, Delft, the Netherlands, 2005, available at: <http://www.irc.nl/page/26444>

Children's hygiene clubs can be set up as:

- 1. In-school hygiene clubs:** Run by children alongside other clubs in school and are timetabled and teacher-led groups.
- 2. After-school hygiene clubs:** Run by children in the school after class with input from outside the school, such as through the community health worker.
- 3. Community hygiene clubs:** Set up and organized by community workers but often run by children. Available for schoolchildren as well as children who do not go to school, but run as a separate structure in the same way as scout groups. The children function as peer educators.

The advantages of child and youth participation in WASH in school is that they²:

- learn quickly and adapt readily
- can acquire useful knowledge from participating in environmental activities
- "are a source of creativity, energy and initiative, of dynamism and social renewal"
- can contribute meaningfully to WASH and environmental activities in their communities
- are forceful advocates who carry healthy lifestyle messages home and to their community

Hygienic clubs are a perfect way to get children involved in the development of hygienic schools and communities as advocates of change among their peers, their families and the wider community. Since clubs are often being implemented in a culture of limited experience of using participatory methods for teaching life-skills, a good set-up is vital for its success. Some issues of consideration are:

- Youth health clubs should consist of a representative group of the school population in respect of age, gender, socio-economic background, religious or ethnic groups as well as include children with disabilities, if they attend school.
- The relationship between the 'leader' and club 'members' is critical. A leader should listen to children's voices, demands and ideas and there should be a mutual respect between leader and members. The atmosphere should be such that children can freely talk about difficult and/or personal issues.
- Participation in the clubs has to be on a voluntary basis and not be obliged because the clubs do things that adults do not want to do (cleaning of school ground or toilets, etc.).
- All club leaders have to be trained and periodically re-trained and supported in the development of scheduling and content development club meetings.
- Resources such as craft materials, books, training guides, blackboards, etc, have to be provided as long as the clubs exist and not only upon initiation of the clubs. Also provisions have to be made for handing over of materials when peer-educators cease their cooperation

Other opportunities for active participation

Involving children during the design and rehabilitation process for facilities at school is important because children have a different view of the world than adults and therefore experience facilities differently. Children can be frightened in situations that adults consider to

be safe. Getting their views and ask them to jointly look into appropriate and acceptable solutions, will increase success of the programme.

In the Plan International initiated PHASE-project in Nicaragua, peer-educators also actively participate

in meetings, workshops and assessments to monitor and evaluate the program. There are specific meetings for children but also multi-stakeholder meetings and workshops in which they are actively participating.

In the same project in Nicaragua, adolescent children made drawings for new teaching materials. Based on their experience with the original (adult-prepared) educational

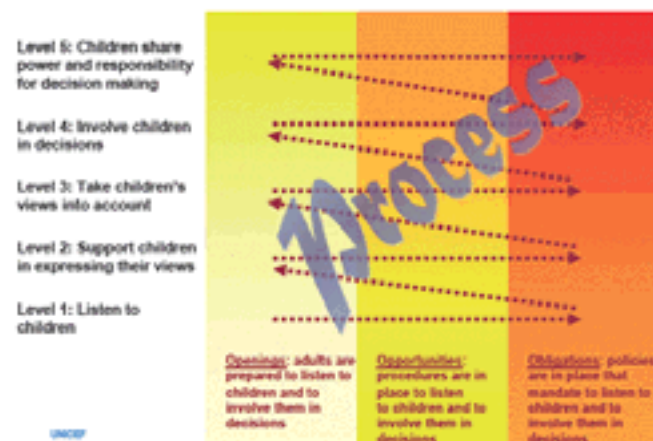
materials, they decided that they themselves could make drawings on new hygiene and health subjects, such as bird flu, environmental degradation and HIV/AIDS. The results were of a high standard and very usable.

Conclusions

It is important to keep in mind that participation is a long-term process and long-standing cultural habits and beliefs do not change overnight. The below diagram gives an overview of the process and levels to be reached to achieve full youth and child participation.

Overall it can be concluded that child and youth participation is sustainable³:

- Where children are given responsibility and support at the same time.
- Where children can see that the activity enhances their image and promotes their rights.
- Where children are able to learn and develop at the same time as contributing.
- Where children are stimulated and have fun.



From presentation "Children as Change Agents" by Joachim Theis, UNICEF, 18-20 October 2006, Bangkok, Thailand

2. From presentation "Child and Youth Participation in WASH" by Joachim Theis and Donna Goodman, UNICEF, 18-20 October 2006, Bangkok, Thailand
3. From presentation "Children's Participation in Health and Hygiene Activities" by Hugh Hawes, Co-founder of Child-to-Child Trust, 18-20 October 2006, UNICEF Bangkok, Thailand

What Children really want: a qualitative assessment in Ethiopia

As part of the country program 2007-2011 preparation, the Government of Ethiopia and UNICEF conducted in 2006 a national assessment of school WASH facilities. The outcomes were that 76% of schools had traditional latrines facilities and 4.4% had hand washing facilities of which only 12% had soap. It was clear from the qualitative assessment that another story existed behind the access numbers.



Therefore a follow-up qualitative assessment was undertaken. The sample size for the qualitative assessment was much smaller than the quantitative but selection of schools was representative based on socio-cultural, religious and geographical factors. The objective of the qualitative assessment was to:

- Assess students preferences for designs
- Assess students 'real' access to facilities and hygiene education
- Understand the linkages between WASH supporting institutions at school level.

Using local adaptations of methodologies like school walks, school mapping, focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews, the following ten child-friendly assumptions were investigated on WASH in schools:

On infrastructure:

1. Providing latrines reduces drop-out rates for girls
2. Modern latrines are better than low-cost, traditional ones
3. Doors are the only way to provide privacy
4. Schools can sustain any water facility given

On use and management:

5. Dirty latrines are a result of a lack of water in the school
6. Water facilities on school premises are used for the benefit of children

On Supervision:

7. Ministry of Health staff are involved in school hygiene and sanitation
8. Standards of cleanliness are common sense

On communication:

9. Sanitation clubs are the best way to promote hygiene and sanitation
10. Using school latrines is an effective way to stimulate demand in the community.

Infrastructure assumptions:

In most schools, latrines were in such deplorable situation that children would not use them. Some girls would opt to 'go home' to use the toilet and not return! In essence, the poorly maintained latrines became reasons for drop-out among girls. Where water did not exist, Muslim students would seek other

latrine facilities at neighbouring houses where they could find water for cleansing.

Where expensive modern latrines existed, they were often not used and maintained. Communities often did not budget maintenance costs after the initial capital building costs. Where latrines were of traditional design, schools better managed and used them. These facilities were familiar to children and were not different from what they had at home. Moreover, schools could easily maintain them using locally available materials.

When doors were included as part of latrine design to offer privacy to the users, soon after construction many doors were vandalised, blown off due to bad weather or infected by termites. This left the latrines useless, as the users could be viewed from the outside. Children



resorted into imaginative solutions to cover themselves while using the toilet. This may be also large rocks strategically in front of the drop holes to get some privacy. In other cases, doors were used to lock out students from use, as teachers feared un-supervised children would make the latrines dirty!

Many traditional latrines without doors were oriented in a manner to offer sufficient privacy. Cleverly situated around bushes or constructed in blind corners was more effective in the long-term for ensuring privacy than the installation of doors. Girls also felt that provision of sufficient distance from boys' latrines or paths for passer-byers was important.

Water is an essential resource for all schools. However, there is little consideration to what systems schools can manage themselves. Many of the schools were provided with water systems that were inoperable because schools could not afford the monthly tariffs, the spare parts or technical support to repair them.

Operation and maintenance plays equal, if not more, importance than the construction of facilities. Selection of water or sanitation technology must be based on premise that communities can maintain them.

Use and Management assumptions:

Many schools with operable water facilities had absolutely filthy latrines and other schools with no water facilities had very clean latrines! Where latrines were clean, schools had arrangements to clean the latrines and in some cases organised children to bring water from home or near-by facilities. Most interesting was the school garden. When authorities were questioned on what water sources were used to maintain the gardens, it was learned that children brought the water from home. This means latrines are not always dirty because of a lack of water but lack of prioritisation, organisation and arrangements to clean them.

Where water facilities existed, it was not uncommon to find the facilities locked. In one district, a water facility was locked during the whole day and only opened in the evening by the guard to water the school garden.

Established cleaning arrangements were important for the children. Children spoke about cases where cleaning latrines was used as a punishment for being late. This was particularly difficult for girls, as many come to school late because of large amounts of household chores prior to classes.

Supervision assumptions:

Community-based Ministry of Health staff is responsible for hygiene and sanitation in schools as part of their job descriptions. It was found for a variety of reasons that health extension workers and sanitarians had limited roles in schools. Sanitarians enforce public health policy and where poor public health problems were reported, they had no authority to enforce sanctions in schools, as they are under a different ministry. In the case of community-based health workers (mainly young, low-educated women), they did not have the authority to approach or sanction school directors who were generally older and male. As a result, their involvement in school management was minimal. A solution would be to put overall responsibility with the school administration and to bring in health workers and sanitarians to provide technical support and guidance.

Standards of cleanliness were found to be one of personal interpretation. What looked clean to one person was considered to be dirty to others. Facilities which

were considered 'clean' by school directors would be unacceptable to regular users or visitors. Even among the team, colleagues could not agree on what was considered clean. Therefore, it is important that minimal hygiene standards are set and agreed upon.

Communication assumptions:

While many reports state the effectiveness of sanitation clubs in mobilising students in schools, it was found the children felt the most popular and effective clubs were the sports and girls clubs and HIV/AIDS and school mini-media clubs in urban areas. In contrary, children did not readily want to be associated with sanitation clubs as task were often relegated to policing and managing facilities. One solution would be to integrate WASH issues in clubs which are popular among students.

Schools can stimulate communities to demand for sanitation and hygiene in societies.

However, this is based on the assumption that children are permitted to voice opinions and are listened to by adults. Where societies restrict children's engagement or dialogue, there is difficulty for innovation from schools to reach communities. Children voiced concerns and frustrations that new ideas learned in schools could not be presented at home because of the nature of their societies. Meanwhile in well-managed structures such as refugee camps, communal latrines were kept in very good conditions while the facilities in their schools were in very bad condition. Hence the linkage between schools and communities is not always a natural one but needs planned mechanisms to support communication and give children a platform to speak and to be heard.



A continued path of learning

As a result of the assessment, guidelines have been developed to support district and school level officials to better manage facilities. In the coming months, guidelines on design of facilities will be developed based on the children's input from the qualitative assessment. Specific attention will be given to ensure facilities are appropriate for girls and children with special needs. This will support a continued path of learning for Government of Ethiopia and UNICEF in trying to understand what children really want and the real story behind the numbers.

National schools' sanitation essay competition in Uganda – How children refuse dirty sanitation and take action!

This essay competition, organised by the National Sanitation Working Group, was open to both primary and secondary schools and attracted thousands of entries from across Uganda. Prizes were awarded in July 2007. Below is an essay written by Annet Mary Musasizi from the Stella Maris School who won the second prize for secondary school students.

Turning smelly school latrines into attractive places

A few years back, we had a major problem of stinking latrines in my (boarding) school. As a result, flies welcomed the stench by making our latrines their habitat. It was so bad that one could smell the mixture of urine and faeces from about two metres away as you approach the latrines.

Once inside them, you had to keep the door partly open or you would suffocate. The ever-evaporating urine could sting your eyes. You had to also either hold your breath and nose or risk tasting the odour. Worst of all, as you headed back to the classrooms or dormitories, a friend wouldn't have to ask you where you are coming from for the stench on your clothes would easily answer that before you could get a chance of physically proclaiming that you were coming from the latrines.

The issue became every one's problem and soon, we came up with solutions to solving it by putting our heads together. Indeed, two heads know more than one. Our first solution was to clean the latrines with ash on a daily basis. This suppressed the stench of urine. Each class participated in this activity for a week up to the end of the year.

The second solution was to smoke the latrines daily using dry banana leaves, but sometimes we added papers picked from the school compound. Sooner than later, the invading flies were migrating back to wherever they had come from. But most important, not only did we get rid of the flies but also completely wiped out the intoxicating stench of urine and faeces.

The last solution, which would eventually lead to our triumph over the problem, was to request the headmistress to get us wood. More so the art students, so that we could apply our skills practically and make latrine covers by ourselves.

Furthermore, we also endeavour to scrub the latrines with liquid soap and water at least thrice a week. Afterwards, disinfectant was poured in the latrines to kill any germs associated with them.

Now I can ease myself in the latrines with the door closed because of our efforts at ensuring good latrines cover and maintenance!

From waste everywhere to a neat school compound

Similarly, we had problems with waste management. And waste being any material or food that is useless, one could find the school compound littered with papers, polyethylene bags, leaves and food around the dining hall. In the dining area, kitchen inclusive, food would be found anywhere and at any time. Students have developed a tendency of pouring food behind the kitchen hence making the place stink.

Having many trees in the compound, it was hectic to collect dry leaves especially during the dry seasons because it was usually windy.

In the dormitory area, it was worse! Girls would dump used pads anywhere provided nobody was in sight. Forgotten or rather, unwanted clothes would rot in the compound.

So the school was yet to solve more unhygienic problems. We again came up with solutions as a community. One was to collect all wasted food after which it was packed in sacks. The first time we did this, the sacks were transported out on the school van. To make collecting easier, dustbins were bought and distributed to all class rooms and others were placed in strategic places in the compound most especially under trees. So we now pour all the leftovers from our meals in the bins and it is transported on the van to pigs.

Later pits were dug both in the dormitory area and classroom area, near the latrines where rubbish is dumped every day and burnt, afterwards. Every morning, everyone is called upon to participate actively as any responsible student would do, in the cleaning of the school, which we call "General Cleaning".

As for the matter of used pads and their proper disposal, an incinerator was constructed and it is where every female student is expected to dump used sanitary towels and then they are burnt.

Effective re-use of bio-waste

However, since not all wastes are useless, we came up with a method of making them useful by way of improving on the fertility of our banana plants and

pineapples. This was by pouring the collected leaves in these gardens. This practice is also essential for the maintenance of moisture in the soil in addition, controlling the rate at which weeds grow. Apart from that, the leaves are sometimes left in the sacks so as to decompose and used as green yard manure later hence facilitating healthy growth of our plants. The leaves are sometimes applied on the school's farms.

Keeping to the rules!

In addition to the above-mentioned methods on my school's initiative on proper sanitation, the school administration has also set punishments for any student suspected to tearing papers from books, which of course are the same papers that are littered in the compound. Why do they tear out the papers? It is forbidden for any student to hold edible bought from the canteen in bare hands thus students resorted to tearing papers from their books. To stop the habit, we were instructed to go with plates or dishes to the canteen: which is now the case.

Now, the culprits especially those caught in the act of dumping waste materials in the compound are required to burn rubbish in the pits for a week or to pick any pieces of waste material on the school campus for a week, as punishment.

Practising Sanitation for a healthy school environment

All these activities are brought together under the theme, "Practising Sanitation in our society" as an operation designed for good practices like latrine cover and maintenance, waste management, hand washing, among many others.

It has been so successful that on weekends, students prefer conducting their preps under the many shady trees in the compound, for they give off a cool breeze making you relaxed and enjoy reading notes.

For all the efforts to maintain our environment and protect the animals from danger, long live and may God bless you abundantly.

News on WASH in Schools

National Hygiene Education Policy Guidelines in Afghanistan

In 2001 a Hygiene Education Technical Working Group started to work towards harmonisation of hygiene education approaches in Afghanistan. This Group was set up with multi-sectoral membership including the health authorities, two UN agencies and seven NGOs (local and international) covering projects in water supply, sanitation, education, WASH in schools, health and health education.

With the assistance of the Hygiene Education Technical Working Group, the first official policy guidelines on Hygiene Education were launched jointly by the Ministers of public health and rural rehabilitation and development in Afghanistan in April 2007. The full text of guidelines in English can be found at <http://www.mrrd.gov.af/watsan/Policy%20-%20English.pdf>

Currently discussions are taking place in the Technical Working Group meetings on the harmonized approach towards the implementation of the policy; use of common IEC materials for hygiene promotion etc.

For more information contact Nadarajah Moorthy, UNICEF Afghanistan, e-mail: nmoorthy@unicef.org

Less diarrhoea through simple water treatment at school in Kenya

Clinic visits for diarrhoea in a Kenyan school peaked during the January-March period in 2002 at 130 diarrhoea episodes and in 2003 at 71, but in 2004, after project implementation, dropped to only 13. This is the result reported by researchers¹ from a pilot water treatment project in a school in rural Western Kenya which started in May 2003.

To prevent diarrhoea the project implemented the Safe Water System (water treatment with bleach, safe storage, and behaviour-change communications) in 2000. Teachers taught students about safe water and hygiene. Safe water storage vessels were placed between classrooms. Two large water tanks for handwashing were positioned by the kitchen and latrines. The vessels were filled daily with water, which was treated with bleach and monitored for free chlorine residuals. Daily student logs were reviewed at the local clinic.

The project saved the school about 5.49 dollars per student per year. The project has been expanded to 70 schools, and a fuller evaluation is planned.

For more information contact Robert Quick, Enteric Diseases Epidemiology Branch, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, USA, e-mail: xq1@cdc.gov, <http://www.cdc.gov/safewater/>

1. Migele, J. [et al.] (2007). Diarrhea prevention in a Kenyan school through the use of a simple safe water and hygiene intervention. *American journal of tropical medicine and hygiene*; .vol. 76, no. 2; p. 351-353. Abstract and more info <http://www.ajtmh.org/cgi/content/abstract/76/2/351>

Kenya: Sustainable sanitary health for improved girls' education

The Binti Africa Foundation has won a grant of US\$ 170,995 to lower the rate of infection and increase school attendance among primary school girls in Kenya's coastal areas by producing affordable hygienic pads and setting up model washrooms for girls. Out of more than 2900 applicants, it was one of the 22 projects who won grants in 2007 from a US\$ 4 million award pool co-funded by the World Bank's Development Marketplace (DM) and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Development Marketplace is a competitive grant program of the World Bank that funds innovative small-scale development projects that deliver results and have the potential to be expanded or replicated.

The project offers a comprehensive approach that will produce and distribute affordable hygienic sanitary pads at the local level, contributing to improved health and primary school attendance among adolescent girls. Previous campaigns in Kenya for the provision of sanitary pads have led to minimal long term impact due to their failure in reducing the price of pads (US\$0.50) for poor families who survive on US\$1 per day. This project, allows the schools to produce the pads themselves at affordable costs through an innovative financially sustainable model. The project will benefit 100,000 adolescent girls in coastal Kenya over the next two years while employing 17 workers. This project has various aspects which include: a baseline survey; community vetting activities; establishment of a local sanitary pad production centre; distribution of pads to schools; and construction of model girl's washrooms in a total of 15 pilot schools.

For more information contact Zipporah Nyamauncho Ongwenyi, Binti Africa Foundation, Nairobi, Kenya, e-mail: zippy@bintiafrica.org

PAKISTAN, NFWP: School Sanitation and Hygiene Education Centre established

The Government of North West Frontier Province (NWFP) has established a School Sanitation and Hygiene Education (SSHE) Centre with support of UNICEF. It aims to promote appropriate hygiene behaviours and sustainable use of water and sanitation facilities in schools through capacity development on life skills based hygiene education. Eid Bad Shah, Director, Provincial Institute for Teacher Education (PITE), NWFP, announced this at the orientation workshop on school sanitation and hygiene education organized in Peshawar under the auspices of SSHE Centre. "Provision, and proper maintenance, of water and sanitation facilities in schools is necessary to reduce transmission of diseases. It is also essential to increase school enrolment and retention as well as enhance learning

capacities of school children", he added. Dr. Murtaza Malik, UNICEF's Water and Sanitation Officer said his organisation is supporting the Government in provision of water and sanitation facilities and hygiene promotion in schools in 31 districts of Pakistan. The centre will create a pool of master trainers on school sanitation and hygiene education. It would also train school administrators, pre-service and in-service teachers and parent teachers associations on the child-to-child approach to hygiene education.

For more information contact Dr. Murtaza Malik, UNICEF Pakistan, e-mail: mumalik@unicef.org or Mr. Eid Bad Shah, Director, Provincial Institute of Teacher Education, NWFP, Peshawar, e-mail: sshec.nwfp@gmail.com, website: www.nwfp.gov.pk/sshec

Can Hygiene be Cool and Fun? Insights from School Children in Senegal

A WSP field note has been prepared by Myriam Sidibe and Val Curtis on a research project conducted among primary schools in Dakar. The project suggests that relatively simple low-cost interventions can have far-reaching effects in improving children's hygiene practices. This is provided that they take into account motivational factors and children's sensitivities in relation to toilet practice and personal hygiene.



Field Note can be downloaded from: http://www.wsp.org/filez/pubs/712200752142_Can_Hygiene_be_cool_and_fun_-_Senegal__2007.pdf

Zambia: Using Child-Friendly Schools as entry points for integrated behavioural change & capacity building

UNICEF Zambia supports District Councils and the NGO Africare to implement an integrated water, sanitation and hygiene education programme for schools and communities in Luapula Province.

The implementation approach is to start with the identification of five community and basic schools in each district which meet the criteria established to become 'Child-Friendly' schools. These schools will act as 'Centres of Excellence', at which 25 peer educators

are intensely trained in water, sanitation and hygiene education (using PHAST methodologies), nutrition education, HIV prevention messages, life skills and child rights. Peer educators are selected from among the school students, teachers and parents, and are trained through one-to-one and small group activities.

Each of the five schools will train two 'satellite' schools and each trained peer educator is expected to train 20 other peers. Those schools and educators are subsequently expected to expand the activities to other schools and educators. Through this cascade style

process, the number of schools and communities targeted and the number of children and adults reached can be scaled-up rapidly. It is expected that 15,000 children and adults will be reached within one year of the start of implementation. Alongside this peer-to-peer educational programme, additional water and sanitation facilities will be provided at those schools which do not have satisfactory service levels.

For more information contact Peter Harvey, UNICEF Zambia, e-mail: pharvey@unicef.org

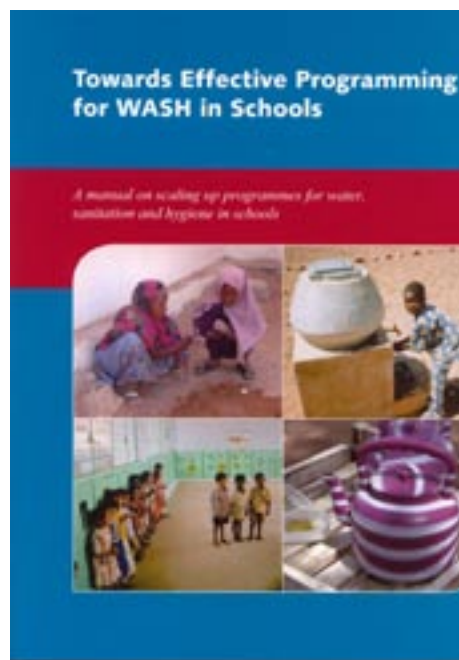
ANNOUNCEMENT: Publication of “Towards Effective Programming for WASH in Schools”

Towards Effective Programming for WASH in Schools. A Manual on scaling up programmes for water, sanitation and hygiene in schools, Technical Paper Series, Publication by UNICEF and IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre, Delft, the Netherlands, 2007

Launched in September 2007, this manual on water, sanitation and hygiene in schools is an update of the popular UNICEF-IRC publication from 1998: “Towards better programming: A manual on school sanitation and hygiene education”.

The manual highlights activities related to scaling up and sustaining WASH in schools. Issues included are: planning, coordination, management and monitoring in the school, linking with the community, scaling-up to district level, setting up hygiene education, designing and maintaining child-friendly facilities. All issues described in this manual are written in a directly applicable style. Where possible, practical examples from projects in the field are given.

The manual has been written by a team of IRC-staff with input from project partners, UNICEF, Governments and NGOs.



The manual can be downloaded from <http://www.irc.nl/page/167>. Hardcopies can be ordered online at the IRC website or through e-mail at publications@irc.nl.

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