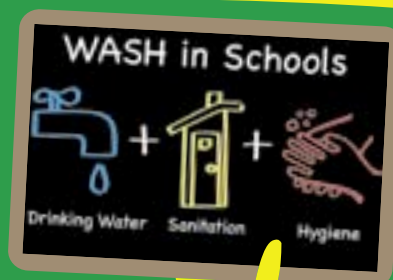


MAINTAINING THE MOMENTUM

Advancing Health, Learning and Equity through WASH in Schools



Even More
A companion to *Raising Clean Hands*





November 2014

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Design and layout: Sarratou Mariko | sarra2mariko.com

Editor: Jeff Sinden

For more information about this publication, please contact Murat Sahin, msahin@unicef.org.

Maintaining the momentum: Advancing Health, Learning and Equity through WASH in Schools. A Companion to Raising Even More Clean Hands, 2014

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MAINTAINING THE MOMENTUM

Advancing Health, Learning and Equity through WASH in Schools

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Summary: Maintaining the Momentum for WASH in Schools

Fulfilling every child's right to water, sanitation and hygiene education (WASH) remains a major challenge for policymakers, school administrators and communities. Among its many benefits WASH in Schools (WinS) significantly reduces hygiene-related disease, increases student attendance and contributes to dignity and gender equality. Despite increasing awareness of the benefits of WinS, almost half of all schools in low-income countries still lack access to water and sanitation facilities.¹

In support of national and international efforts to address this gap, a *Call to Action: Raising Clean Hands*, was published in 2010 and updated in 2012 (*Raising Even More Clean Hands*) as a collaborative effort of the more than 70 organizations that make up the WASH in Schools Global Network. This publication, which has been developed as a companion to *Raising Even More Clean Hands*, lays out guiding principles around four priority areas: daily group hand washing; menstrual hygiene management (MHM); WASH in Schools in the post-2015 development agenda; and strengthening the evidence base. The guiding principles were

developed by the network's Thematic Working Groups to help make the partners' vision a reality: a world where all children go to school and all schools provide a safe, healthy and comfortable environment where children grow, learn and thrive.

The second WASH in Schools Global Network meeting was held 10-11 December 2013 at UNICEF House in New York with the participation of 38 network members, representing the academic community, civil society, NGOs, United Nations agencies and donors.

The meeting focused on presenting and refining strategies for action within four priority areas that were drawn from the network's flagship publication, *Raising Even More Clean Hands*. Prior to the meeting, thematic groups were organized, with group members meeting virtually over a three-month period to discuss programming principles within each area. At the December meeting, thematic group leaders presented the results of the discussions and meeting participants developed a number of 'Guiding Principles' for each.

Appropriate and functioning facilities are essential to group hand washing.

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PRIORITY AREA 1 Daily Group Hand Washing

Supervised daily group hand washing in schools can be an effective strategy for building hygiene habits, with the potential to lead to positive health and education outcomes for children. While the concept is relatively new, there are already examples of group hand washing being incorporated into large-scale programmes. Guiding principles have been developed to assist decision makers and programme implementers build on this positive momentum and further scale up hand-washing programmes.

Guiding principles

1. Hygiene education should be skills-based.
2. Group hand washing should be done on a daily basis.
3. Appropriate and functioning facilities are essential to group hand washing.
4. Hand-washing programmes should be managed and monitored by the school.
5. Funding for hand-washing programmes should be included in government budgets.
6. School feeding programmes provide an ideal point of entry for hand-washing activities.

Children wash their hands before a mid day meal in Bihar, India. School feeding programmes provide an ideal point of entry for hand-washing activities.

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PRIORITY AREA 2 Menstrual Hygiene Management

Strong cultural taboos around menstruation, which are present in many societies, coupled with a lack of MHM services in schools, results in many girls likely staying away from school during menstruation. Providing female students and staff with practical information and private and safe facilities for MHM contributes to dignity and gender equality and may decrease absenteeism. The importance of MHM in schools is increasingly recognized, but many challenges remain. Guiding principles have been developed to assist local and national authorities to overcome these challenges by planning and implementing effective MHM programmes.

Guiding principles

1. Information on existing beliefs, practices, facilities and policies around MHM should be systemically collected in all countries.
2. National plans for MHM in schools should be developed and implemented in cooperation with a wide range of stakeholders.
3. MHM should be incorporated into national teacher-training curricula.
4. National indicators for MHM in schools should be developed and regularly monitored.

A social organizer conducts a 'Menstrual Hygiene Matters' session at the Government High School, Narang Colony, Mithi, Pakistan.

© WaterAid



PRIORITY AREA 3

WASH in Schools in the Post-2015 Development Agenda

The possibility of WASH in Schools being included in the new set of global development goals represents a significant opportunity to raise the profile of WinS. Guiding principles have been developed to help stakeholders improve standards and monitoring to maximize the visibility of WinS in the post-2015 global development targets.

Guiding principles

1. All countries should develop and promote national targets for WinS.
2. National WinS standards should be developed or updated in all countries.
3. Stakeholders should promote and support the development of robust national monitoring systems for WinS.
4. Monitoring data should be incorporated into national and international advocacy activities.

Assisted by his mother, a boy who uses a wheelchair leaves an accessible latrine in Indonesia. WinS research should focus on equity and inclusion.

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Formula 1 Driver and UNICEF Ambassador, Fernando Alonso, leads children in a hand-washing activity in Uttar Pradesh, India. Advocacy efforts are needed to maximize the visibility of WinS.

PRIORITY AREA 4

Strengthening the Evidence Base

The strength of the current WASH in Schools evidence base, upon which advocacy and programming are dependent, is varied. While the role of WinS in improving health outcomes and boosting attendance among school children is now more recognized, there remains a need to improve the evidence base around a range of areas, including on the efficacy and effectiveness of WinS programmes. Guiding principles have been developed to assist researchers, funding agencies, governments and implementers in their efforts to strengthen the WinS evidence base.

Guiding principles

1. Outcome monitoring should be strengthened.
2. Research should be undertaken to compare WinS approaches.
3. Research should focus on equity and inclusion.
4. Research should be undertaken to better understand the priorities and perspectives of students and teachers.
5. Evidence and lessons learned should be shared through translational research.
6. Inter-sectoral collaboration should be strengthened.

About WASH in Schools

Every child has the right to a safe and healthy learning environment, including safe water, sanitation and hygiene education. Among its many benefits, WASH in Schools:

- Provides healthy, safe and secure school environments that can protect children from health hazards, abuse and exclusion. WinS helps ensure quality education, because children who are healthy and well nourished can fully participate in schooling. Quality education, in turn, leads to better health and nutrition outcomes, especially for girls.
- Encourages children's pride in their schools and communities by providing dignity and privacy.

WinS enables children to become agents of change for improving water, sanitation and hygiene practices in their families and communities.

- Invests in schoolchildren and the health of future generations. WinS helps children realize their full potential now and prepares them for healthy living as adults.

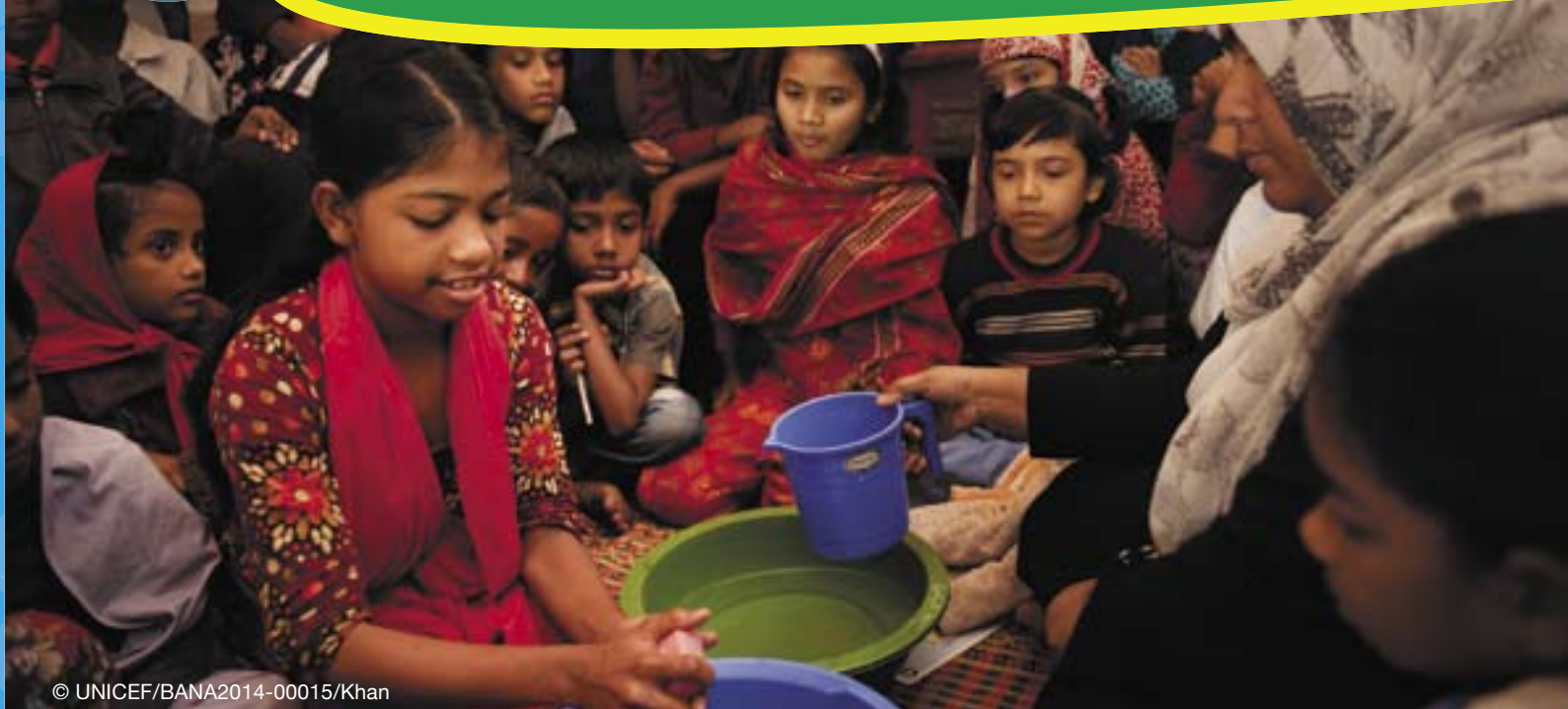
Despite the significant benefits of WinS, more than half of all primary schools in the developing countries with available data do not have adequate water facilities and nearly two thirds lack adequate sanitation.² Even where facilities exist, they are often in poor condition.

WASH in Schools creates a cycle of opportunity



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Daily Group Hand Washing



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Fatema, 11, demonstrates proper hand-washing techniques at school in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Schools should work to develop adequate knowledge and attitudes on hand washing with soap through skills-based education.

Supervised daily group hand washing in schools can be an effective strategy for building hygiene habits, with the potential to lead to positive health and education outcomes for children. While the concept is relatively new, there are already examples of group hand washing being incorporated into large-scale programmes. In the Philippines the Essential Health Care Program (EHCP) is reaching 2.5 million children with three school-based group activities, including daily group hand washing with soap (using an approach developed by the NGO Fit for School).³ In early 2014 the Government of India announced that group hand washing would become part of the country's Mid Day Meal Programme, which reaches more than 1.2 million schools and 110 million children.⁴ The following

guiding principles have been developed to help decision makers and programme implementers build on this positive momentum and further scale up hand-washing programmes.

Guiding principles

- 1. Hygiene education should be skills based**
Providing classroom education on the importance of hand washing is not sufficient to effectively change children's behaviour. Schools should work to develop adequate knowledge and attitudes on hand washing with soap through skills-based education. Supervised daily practice helps to ensure that hand washing becomes a regular part of children's lives.
- 2. Group hand washing should be done on a daily basis**
Group activities make learning easier and more enjoyable for children. Hand washing should be done in groups on a daily basis prior to eating.



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Children sit in line to have their mid day meal at a Child-Friendly School in Hajipur, Bihar, India. Group hand washing can be easily added to school feeding routines.



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Hand-washing facilities should be made from low-cost and locally available materials.

3. Appropriate and functioning facilities are essential to group hand washing

Hand-washing facilities should be made from low-cost and locally available materials to minimize dependence on external support. The local community should be involved in the design, construction and maintenance of facilities to create a sense of ownership. Facilities should be situated close to classrooms and be large enough to accommodate 15-25 students at a time. Ideally, each classroom should have its own facility.

4. Hand-washing programmes should be managed and monitored by the school

To ensure quality and impact, hand-washing programmes should be managed and monitored at the school level. School principals should have ultimate responsibility for the programme, ensuring that group hand washing is part of the daily schedule and that teachers have the knowledge and materials necessary to correctly lead and supervise the activity.

5. Funding for hand-washing programmes should be included in government budgets

Adequate government funding (either national or local) is necessary for the construction and maintenance of facilities and the provision of supplies. Proper budgeting, taking into account the school population and the cost of facilities, supplies and human resources, should be done by the relevant government agency on an annual basis.

6. School feeding programmes provide an ideal point of entry for hand-washing activities

Group hand washing can be easily added to school feeding routines. Health impacts are maximized by ensuring children wash their hands prior to eating. In the absence of school feeding, other daily routines – such as school gardening, cleaning of school grounds, solid waste management and sports activities – can provide entry points for group hand washing.



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A teacher conducts a session on menstrual hygiene with a group of adolescent girls at Krishnopur High School, Rokonpur, Bangladesh. MHM should be incorporated into national teacher-training curricula.

Strong cultural taboos around menstruation are present in many societies. With the onset of puberty, adolescent girls face the embarrassment of having to manage menstruation in schools that are ‘girl-unfriendly’, with toilets that are often unclean, lack privacy and are shared with boys. Also, there is often a lack of accurate and practical information on menstrual hygiene management (MHM). As a result, many girls likely stay away from school during menstruation. Providing female students and staff with practical information and private and safe facilities for MHM contributes to dignity and gender equality and may decrease absenteeism.

The importance of MHM in schools is increasingly recognized, but many challenges remain. The following guiding principles have been developed to assist local and national authorities to overcome these challenges by planning and implementing effective MHM programmes.

Guiding principles

1. Information on existing beliefs, practices, facilities and policies around MHM should be systemically collected in all countries

To inform the development of MHM programmes in schools, it is important to assess the status of existing MHM-related beliefs, practices, facilities and policies. Important factors to assess include:

- Local menstruation-related beliefs, taboos, knowledge and practices;
- Availability of latrines (including gender-segregation, safety, privacy and quality), water, disposal facilities and other supplies;

- Provision of MHM guidance for teachers and girls (puberty books, inclusion in curricula, etc.); and
- Existence of national or local policies that incorporate MHM and WASH in Schools.

Evidence on local beliefs and practices can be collected through desk reviews and / or small-scale qualitative studies. Information on facilities and supplies may be available through the national Education Management Information System (EMIS) or other surveys.

2. National plans for MHM in schools should be developed and implemented in cooperation with a wide range of stakeholders

In most countries, school-based MHM is left largely to the Ministry of Education. As menstruation involves a range of complex issues, a wider range of stakeholders should be involved, including other ministries (health, water, sanitation, gender, finance, etc.), community groups, NGOs, UN agencies, donor agencies, faith-based partners and private sector actors. These stakeholders should be gathered to review current beliefs, facilities and policies and to formulate an implementation plan.

MHM plans should include strong advocacy components. Media campaigns, including the involvement of national MHM ‘champions’ and faith-based leaders, can be effective in overcoming taboos and keeping menstruating girls in school.

3. MHM should be incorporated into national teacher-training curricula

Teachers are a critical component of MHM in schools through the support they can provide to adolescent girls, and priority should be given to their training. Hygiene in general, and MHM in particular, should be incorporated into national teacher-training curricula. Teachers should be provided with training materials, toolkits and other resources that are evidence-based and culturally appropriate.

4. National indicators for MHM in schools should be developed and regularly monitored

To monitor programme outcomes and help build the evidence base, a small set of national MHM indicators should be agreed upon with stakeholders. Ideally these should be consistent with the post-2015 global development goals currently being formulated.

Sanitation kits for girls at the Sor Elementary and Junior School, Geyi Village, Oromia, Ethiopia.

© WaterAid



Sanitary towels being disposed of in a bathroom wall at Saral Adarsha Secondary School, Nagbahal, Lalitpur, Nepal.

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WASH in Schools in the Post-2015 Development Agenda



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Nujulee Begum, Water and Environmental Sanitation Specialist, UNICEF Bangladesh, talks to school officials during a field monitoring visit, Bangladesh. Stakeholders should promote and support the development of robust national monitoring systems for WinS.

Virtually every developing country has defined targets for water and sanitation based on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). While target setting does not automatically lead to improvements in coverage, it is clear that these targets have helped to drive progress. For WASH in Schools, the situation is quite different. There is no WinS MDG target (or any other widely adopted global target) and thus relatively few countries have set national targets. As a consequence, the perceived importance of WinS among policy makers is not as high as it could be.

WinS also lags in the area of monitoring. In some countries monitoring systems are non-existent, while in others indicators and definitions are not well developed. It should be easier to monitor WASH in Schools than in households (there are far more of the latter than of the former), but in reality there is much more information about the situation in households than in schools. This is due to the considerable effort spent developing the Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation (JMP). There is no equivalent global monitoring tool for WinS.

Both the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the JMP have indicated that WinS should be part of the new set of global development goals. This represents a significant opportunity to raise the global profile of WASH in Schools. The following guiding principles have been developed to help WinS stakeholders make the most of this opportunity.



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UNICEF supporter and singer Katy Perry pumps water at a primary school in Madagascar. Advocacy efforts are needed to help raise the profile of WinS.



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Children wash their hands at Kingugi School in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. All countries should develop and promote national targets for WASH in Schools.

Guiding principles

1. All countries should develop and promote national targets for WinS

Targets should be guided by the proposed post-2015 targets and be based on national standards. In some cases interim targets should be defined to encourage the scale-up of the most important programme components (such as group hand washing).

2. National WinS standards should be developed or updated in all countries

National standards and targets form the basis of global target setting and reporting. Standards development should be informed by global guidelines and tailored to the local context. Countries should consider the institutionalization of interim WinS standards as a way of expanding coverage in key areas more rapidly.

3. Stakeholders should promote and support the development of robust national monitoring systems for WinS

Indicators should be based on national standards and targets as well as global best practices, including the *WASH in Schools Monitoring Package* (UNICEF, 2011). Indicators should include a small set that is common to all countries (as proposed in Annex 1) and additional indicators as required nationally. Ideally, WinS monitoring should become a core component of the national EMIS or its local equivalent.

4. Monitoring data should be incorporated into national and international advocacy activities

WinS stakeholders should work together to ensure that monitoring data is used effectively to promote sector goals, including an increase in resources for WinS. Effective advocacy requires a full set of evidence on national WinS programming, including both monitoring data and complementary information from studies and research.

Strengthening the Evidence Base



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A teacher gives a class on hygiene at the Tokpombu Dama Al-Fattah Islamic primary school in the village of Tokpombu Dama, Kenema district, Sierra Leone. Research should be undertaken to better understand the priorities and perspectives of students and teachers.

The strength of the current WinS evidence base, upon which advocacy and programming are dependent, is varied. While the role of WASH in Schools in improving health outcomes and boosting attendance among school children is now more recognized, there is still a need to improve the evidence base around a range of areas, including on the efficacy and effectiveness of WinS programmes (see Annex 2 for a review of the current evidence base). Quality research is time-consuming and expensive, but is necessary for advocacy and for improving programme design. The following principles have been developed to help guide researchers, funding agencies, governments and implementers in their efforts to strengthen the WinS evidence base.

Guiding Principles

1. Outcome monitoring should be strengthened

WinS programmes typically monitor outputs, including the number of latrines built and the number of schools reached with behaviour change activities. However, in order to demonstrate effectiveness, WinS programmes should also track key outcomes, such as the number of children using latrines and the number washing their hands at key times.

2. Research should be undertaken to compare WinS approaches

There is a growing body of evidence that shows that WinS can have a positive impact on health and education outcomes. However, the realization of impact depends on successful intervention models where services are functional and used by students. Research is needed to compare various WinS approaches and to identify effective strategies on how WinS programming can efficiently and sustainably lead to service improvements and behaviour change.



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A girl demonstrates proper hand washing at school in Sierra Leone. Qualitative studies are needed to investigate both boys' and girls' perspectives on gender-segregated toilets.



© UNICEF/NYHQ2008-1061/Nesbitt

Latrines accessible to disabled students in the town of Bungudu, Nigeria. Additional research is needed on how to construct more inclusive WASH facilities.

3. Research should focus on equity and inclusion

While some research has been undertaken on how to construct more inclusive WASH facilities to meet the needs of people with disabilities and to make facilities more gender sensitive, little evidence is available about how these issues can be applied in a WASH in Schools context.⁵ There is also little evidence regarding the cost effectiveness of inclusive facilities. More work in this area is needed to determine how best to design inclusive WinS programming. For instance, qualitative studies are needed to investigate both boys' and girls' perspectives on gender-segregated toilets.

4. Research should be undertaken to better understand the priorities and perspectives of students and teachers

If WinS services and facilities are not acceptable to students or hygiene education does not consider their priorities, behaviour change is unlikely. It is also important to understand the perspectives and needs of teaching staff as they lead by example and often wield influence over WASH-related decisions. Lessons from the private sector, such as consumer research and

formative research, could inform programming improvements.⁶

5. Evidence and lessons learned should be shared through translational research

Currently, there is little or no systematic documentation of the successes and failures of WinS programmes. Implementers should develop rigorous documentation of best practices and lessons learned. The SWASH+ programme (Sustaining and Scaling School Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Plus Community Impact) in Kenya provides an example of the successful dissemination of information through both informal lessons learned documents and peer-reviewed publications.

6. Inter-sectoral collaboration should be strengthened

Integration of WinS interventions with other health- and education-focused initiatives, such as nutrition-based programming and the elimination of neglected tropical diseases, may improve overall health and education outcomes. More work is needed to build a strong evidence base for collaborative programming.⁷

ANNEX 1: Proposed Core Indicators

The following is a small set of core WinS indicators that the WASH in Schools Global Network believes should be collected by each country and synthesized globally. In most countries, a larger set of indicators will be needed to satisfy national monitoring goals.

1. Number of functional gender-segregated toilets for girls and boys, and the number of toilets for teachers

Resulting data: Number and proportion of schools with student to toilet ratios that meet national standards (disaggregated by sex, geographic region and urban/rural).

2. Existence of one or more functional water points that meet requirements for both hygiene and drinking water

Resulting data: Number and proportion of schools with adequate water facilities (disaggregated by geographic region and urban/rural).

3. Existence of a hygiene promotion programme that is resulting in children washing their hands with soap at school

Resulting data: Number and proportion of schools with effective hand-washing education programmes (disaggregated by region and urban/rural). This indicator will be monitored using the JMP proxy indicator for hand washing with soap.

ANNEX 2: The Current Evidence Base

The following is a brief review of the current WinS evidence base, which has been organized around six areas: health, education, equity and inclusion, community, behaviour change and management.

Health

There is evidence that WASH in Schools can improve student health. Studies have shown reduction in soil-transmitted helminth infection, acute respiratory illness and diarrhoea.⁸ In China, a comprehensive WASH package was shown to improve diarrhoea among the siblings of school children, but diarrhoea was not reduced by an intervention that only promoted hygiene and sanitation.⁹ However, this may have been due to sub-optimal hygiene, which in the presence of higher sanitation use may lead to health risks.¹⁰

Education

There is evidence that WASH in Schools can improve school attendance, particularly for girls.¹¹ There is some evidence that a comprehensive WASH package can increase enrolment.¹² There is also some evidence that reducing dehydration in primary schools can improve pupils' cognitive abilities.¹³ However, there is no evidence that suggests that WinS interventions are more cost-effective in improving educational outcomes compared to other non-WASH interventions.

Equity and Inclusion

WASH in Schools has been linked to improved equity, including reduced time hauling water for girls, increased safety and improved comfort for menstrual hygiene management.¹⁴ While some studies are looking at access to and participation in WASH programmes by people with disabilities, little research has been done in this area specifically for WASH in Schools.¹⁵

Community

There is some evidence that pupils can act as agents of change, influencing their siblings and parents to change their WASH practices.¹⁶ However, impact depends on continued access to functional WASH services and associated behaviour changes. Group hand-washing activities are known to reinforce social interactions among school children and reinforce social norms within the school community.¹⁷

Behaviour change

Knowledge on how to effectively and sustainably change WASH-related behaviours, and how to develop programmes that change behaviour, is currently limited. One of the few things that is known is that better maintenance and cleanliness of toilets is associated with higher use.¹⁸ Social norms and children's perspectives also play a significant role.¹⁹

Management

Management-related barriers to the provision of WinS services have been identified in a number of countries, including a lack of incentives to manage services, poor quality construction and inadequate supply chains.²⁰ There has been no evidence correlating the presence of a janitor, school size, or student to toilet ratio to sanitation conditions. The influence of student health clubs has only been associated with higher service maintenance when the clubs were active in WASH. In general, continued financial support for operations and maintenance has been linked with better-maintained services. Specific to soap provision, using soapy water has the potential to be more sustainable than bar soap.²¹

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Six points of action for WASH in Schools

Because every child has the right to be in a school that provides safe water, sanitation and hygiene education, we call for renewed commitments to:

- 1. Set minimum standards for WASH in Schools**
Adopt national, regional and local standards based on UNICEF-World Health Organization guidelines. The minimum standards for WASH in Schools should be specific to each context.
- 2. Monitor WASH in Schools coverage through Education Management Information Systems (EMIS)**
Advocate for the inclusion of WASH in Schools indicators in EMIS. Analyse data annually and use the findings for advocacy and better resource allocation.
- 3. Engage with at scale WASH in Schools programmes**
Contribute to the bigger picture by bringing individual or small-scale projects into cooperative initiatives that effectively reach more schools. Gradual improvements to facilities and hygiene practices require less investment in operation and maintenance and can be sustained with local resources.
- 4. Involve multiple stakeholders to support WASH in Schools programmes**
Community members, civil society advocates, members of the media, students, school staff, local and regional authorities, non-governmental organizations, faith-based groups, public-private partnerships, and ministries of education, water, health and finance, as well as donors, can all support planning and action for WASH in Schools.
- 5. Contribute evidence on the impact of WASH in Schools programmes**
Local and global academic communities have expertise that can support the design of WASH in Schools programmes and chart their impact. Generating and sharing evidence will provide WASH in Schools advocates with a powerful tool to attract attention and funding to the sector.
- 6. Raise the profile of WASH in Schools programmes**
Adapt global and regional publications, advocacy materials and knowledge for the local context and disseminate them widely. Encourage members of the community to participate in customizing global WASH in Schools materials to local settings.

For more information, please contact Murat Sahin (msahin@unicef.org).