



# The SWASH+ Project

SWASH+ is an action-research and advocacy project focusing on increasing the scale, impact and sustainability of school water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) interventions in Kenya. The current partners of the SWASH+ consortium are CARE, Emory University's Center for Global Safe Water, the Great Lakes University of Kisumu, and the Government of Kenya.

## Project Objectives

- Identify, develop, and test innovative approaches to school- and community-based water, sanitation, and hygiene interventions that promote sustainability and scalability.
- Provide and test an integrated safe water, sanitation, and hygiene-promotion program in schools and communities that maximizes impact, equity, sustainability, and cost-effectiveness.
- Positively influence Kenyan government investments in school water, sanitation and hygiene by leveraging learning on sustainable, scalable, and effective approaches.

## Research

SWASH+ has conducted a series of rigorous quantitative studies in 185 schools where the project has been implemented as well as qualitative studies on a number of topics. Research topics include:

- Anal Cleansing
- Diffusion of behaviors from schools to homes
- Impact
- Innovations (Soapy Water, Girls' Urinals, Washrooms)
- Menstrual Management
- Rainwater Harvesting
- Sustainability
- WASH knowledge, attitudes and practices in schools and communities

Reports and summaries of the research findings can be found online at [www.swashplus.org](http://www.swashplus.org)

## Some Key Findings

School WASH can increase girls' attendance: Preliminary findings reveal that girls' absenteeism reduced substantially in intervention schools near a water source that received hygiene and water treatment interventions.

School WASH is more complex than generally understood: The partners have identified a variety of gaps in typical interventions including around menstrual management, latrine maintenance and anal cleansing and in the overall enabling environment for school WASH.

Sustainability of gains is endangered by a lack of supporting systems: While 87% of schools provided drinking water in a surprise visit after 3 years, only 27% had treated it; while 63% had hand washing water, only 8% had soap available. This suggests a lack of supporting systems; for example, schools in Kenya currently have no budget for soap and chlorine solution.

Message transfer to homes is modest: Research findings show only modest transfers of messages from children to parents, suggesting that school and community interventions should be combined for maximum impact.

## Current and Upcoming Activities

- To address sustainability issues, the partners are working with the Ministry of Education to urge and study improvements in supporting systems such as budgets available to schools for recurrent costs like soap or water treatment products. SWASH+ is also working with the Ministry of Education and other school WASH partners to improve monitoring and evaluation processes for Kenyan schools.
- SWASH+ is conducting roles and responsibilities assessments for local-level officials, which will be used to influence thinking on creating supporting systems and accountability for school WASH.
- The partners will launch a pilot on ways to improve latrine maintenance in schools.
- CARE and Emory are applying lessons from SWASH+ to other significant programs such as the Dubai Cares consortium on school WASH that will operate in Mali, Indonesia, Yemen and possibly Morocco.

