

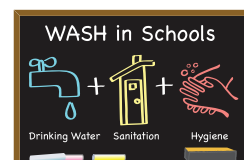


Kenyan school children showing they have just taken their deworming medicine.

Achieving Universal and Lasting School WASH Services

Getting School WASH Right Forum Report

BILL & MELINDA
GATES foundation



SWASH+

Sustaining and Scaling School Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Plus Community Impact



In December 2011 the School Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Plus (SWASH+) partnership (CARE and the Center for Global Safe Water at Emory University), the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the WASH in Schools Network brought together 80 representatives of governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academia, and donor institutions to discuss how to effectively implement and sustain school water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) interventions in developing countries.¹ We took stock of how school WASH efforts have progressed since the 2005 Water and Sanitation for Schools Leadership Forum in Atlanta, Georgia, what recent evidence is teaching us and what it will take to reach sustainable school WASH access at scale.

¹ Detailed list of participants and agenda are in Annexes 1 and 2 respectively at the end of this summary

Where are we now?

Global school water coverage has increased from 63 percent in 2008 to 70 percent in 2010; school sanitation coverage has increased from 59 percent in 2008 to 67 percent in 2010 (UNICEF, 2010a). However, these statistics are not good enough. Even though common sense dictates that school WASH services are necessary for the wellbeing and dignity of a child, there is also mounting evidence of the health, psychosocial, and, by extension, the educational benefits of school WASH. For example, we have some evidence that school-based WASH programs reduce absence and parasitic infection (Bowen, Ma et al., 2007; Freeman, Clasen et al., 2011; Freeman, Greene et al., 2011).

Although there have been gains in the numbers of schools with WASH services, the conversation has changed over time from what works at the school level to how to reach **sustainability at scale**. We now understand that sustainability is not merely about building the right infrastructure but rather about systemic change at the national, district and local level. An effective program must work within the existing policy framework – even as it tries to improve that policy – and work with all stakeholders to ensure clear understanding of roles and responsibilities. For example, without ensuring that the funds for operations and maintenance are institutionalized, hardware for latrines and water for drinking and handwashing will not be sustained. To reach scale, we need to better understand what systemic changes are needed.

At the forum, participants determined that collaboration, while not easy, is the key to scaling and sustaining WASH services. Although this is happening at some levels, collaboration with peers and coordination with stakeholders has yet to be fully ingrained.

What's the evidence telling us?

Looking at the report card on school WASH efforts to date, we get some good grades. For example, studies on handwashing programs show that we can increase student knowledge and that they are sharing that knowledge at



Reaching total and sustainable school WASH coverage

WHAT WILL IT TAKE?

A key activity of the forum was developing a set of recommendations for each constituency group represented (see Annex 3). Participants voted on the statements that resonated most with them. The following are the statements with the most votes:

National governments should provide a national school WASH strategy and coordinate the relevant stakeholders.

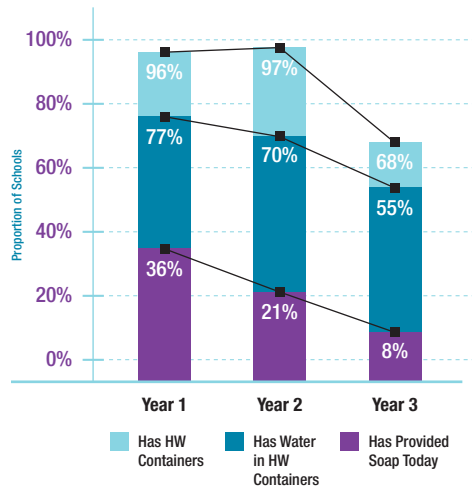
Donors should be willing to fund systematic, flexible, long-term approaches rather than just easily quantifiable infrastructure investments.

International non-governmental organizations (INGOs) should work in coordination with other stakeholders to ensure a sustainable delivery system.

NGOs should commit to sharing experiences and evaluation results (including negative findings) with other NGOs, governments, and research organizations about which approaches do and do not work in given contexts.

Researchers should interpret and make accessible findings for use by multiple audiences.

Fig 1. Sustainability drives impact in Kenya
(from Rheingans presentation)



Donors and implementing organizations might feel they have less control if they work in coordination with other stakeholders and support government leadership; however, they will ultimately be more successful.

NOTES FROM A PANEL DISCUSSION

“If you want a sustainable program, “Try always to embed your program . . . in programs that are already a priority of the government of the country.”

JAMES OLE KIYIAPI
Permanent Secretary,
Ministry of Education, Kenya

home (Blanton et al., 2010; Bowen et al., 2010). School WASH can reduce absenteeism (particularly for girls), reduce helminth infections and change household hygiene behaviors, but reaching these goals depends on who and where you are, how well the intervention is executed and how well it is sustained (Bowen, Ma et al., 2007; Freeman, Clasen et al., 2011; Freeman, Greene et al., 2011). However, we continue to get low grades in what is often considered the most necessary behavior change for health improvements: handwashing with soap. “Only 5% of students are washing with soap, even when facilities are available,” said Murat Sahin citing UNICEF statistics.

A surprising finding from the impact evaluation of the SWASH+ program in Kenya was that in schools receiving new latrines, children had increases in hand contamination by fecal matter. This could be prevented by emphasizing the importance of latrine cleanliness, the interdependence of hand-washing and sanitation, and the need for anal cleansing materials. Impact was determined less by infrastructure and more by whether schools kept the soap in place and kept water treated, which, as shown in Figure 1, is difficult over time.

What changes can we make to reach sustainability at scale?

The recommendations above are not surprising, so why aren't we following them? A series of provocative statements (Annex 4) helped focus the discussion on several specific actions to change the status quo. The major lesson from the forum is that achieving sustainable outcomes at scale requires engaging with government to support systemic change. This is a fundamentally different approach from the typical approach used by NGOs and donors, which is to support direct provision of WASH services in schools. Furthermore, it has become increasingly obvious that school WASH efforts must be part of comprehensive efforts for child health and education.

There are clear reasons why coordination isn't happening currently. Coordination requires sharing vision, skills, information, financial and human resources, intent on the part of those being coordinated and influence on the part of the coordinator. Coordination for school WASH has the additional challenge of requiring engagement across the education, water, health and

finance sectors for each of the constituency groups. However, the government of Kenya is showing a way forward with its National School Health Technical Committee to coordinate the national strategy for school health, that incorporates school WASH. The government has also established a hub in the Ministry of Public Health to collect WASH monitoring and evaluation data. Furthermore, a school WASH program in Zambia supported by USAID is intentionally building on lessons learned by the Kenya SWASH+ program in terms of the need for early and ongoing engagement with government.

Getting school WASH right is not so much about math (counting beneficiaries), but more about the ABCs: Aligning with national priorities, documenting and using Best practices, and Coordination with governments, other players, other sectors and with community-based efforts.

NOTES FROM A PANEL DISCUSSION

At the practical level, we need to **strengthen the link between research and implementation**. For example, handwashing education efforts should be informed by a recent study that shows the most important time affecting contamination is before food preparation (Luby et al., 2011). We could also save time and resources if implementers worked together and shared information, but as Elynn Walter of the WASH Advocacy Initiative noted, “A lot of organizations are nervous about communicating with other organizations because they are competing for funding.”

Donors and NGOs should **shift a higher percentage of funds to advocacy**, using evidence of what works from project implementation to credibly influence governments.

Across the WASH sector, we must **change our measurements of success**. Field staff participants said they continue to see an emphasis on short-term, “more beneficiary per buck” projects. NGOs must help donors understand the benefits of contributing to total, lasting WASH coverage vs. taking credit for relatively smaller gains. As Louis Boorstin from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation put it, “It’s about contribution, not attribution.” All stakeholders should work towards a common vision aligned with the national priorities, starting with planning and resource allocation.

Conclusions

We have identified the barriers; now it’s time to step up our efforts to find solutions. There is an urgent need for coordination across sectors (health and education in particular), amongst NGOs (large and small) and with governments. National or local governments are the logical drivers of that communication and coordination, but we must all be accountable for working this way. Together we can solve this challenge. We can take courage from what has been accomplished and be inspired to raise the bar higher.

ANNEX 1: Participants

| Organization | Representatives |
|--|--|
| A Spring of Hope | Brittany Young, Joanne Young |
| Agua para la Salud | Jackie Powell |
| Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation | Louis Boorstin |
| CARE | Malaika Cheney-Coker, Doris Kaberia, Brooks Keene, Peter Lochery, John Migele, Alex Mwaki, Betty Ojeny, Ben Okech, Jason Oyugi, Chris Toews |
| Catholic Relief Services | Naoko Kamioka, Chris Seremet, Dennis Warner |
| Children Without Worms | Cassandra Holloway |
| Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian (CCAP) Water and Sanitation Programmes | Jim McGill |
| Dubai Cares | Yousuf Caires |
| Emory University | Kelly Alexander, Bethany Caruso, Robert Dreibelbis, Matt Freeman, Leslie Greene, Christine Moe, Clair Null, Sarah Porter, Shadi Saboori, Victoria Trinies, Anil Vora, Sarah Yerian, Karen Levy |
| Global Water Challenge | Monica Ellis, Kyle Sucher |
| Government of Kenya Ministry of Education | Prof. James L. Kiyiapi, Leah Rotich |
| Government of Kenya Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation | John Kariuki, Dr. Kepha Ombacho |
| Great Lakes University of Kisumu | Emily Awino, Dr. Richard Muga |
| Improve International | Susan Davis |
| Innovations for Poverty Action – Kenya | Holly Dentz, Sarah Gilman |
| International Rural Water Association | Bill Kramer |
| International Trachoma Initiative and Lymphatic Filariasis Support Center | PJ Hooper |
| Johns Hopkins University | Tanvi Nagpal |
| Kimberly-Clark Corporation, Global Sustainability | Mike Lloyd |
| Kosovo-Addis | Angelita Fasnacht |
| Margaret A. Cargill Foundation | Mark Lindberg, Terry Meersman |
| Millennium Water Alliance | Rafael Callejas |
| OMEP-USA | Judith Wagner |

Organization**Representatives**

| | |
|--|---|
| Palms for Life Fund | Hannah Laufer |
| PATH | Liz Blanton, Jenna Forsyth, Robyn Willmouth |
| Project WET Foundation | Julia Nelson, Morgan Perlson |
| Pure Water for the World, Inc. | Carolyn Meub |
| Pure Water For The World-Haiti | Dieudonne M. Khula |
| Rotary Fort Lauderdale | Martin Brody |
| RTI International | Seyi Ibidapo |
| Save the Children | Dan Abbott, Seung Lee |
| The Coca-Cola Company | Joe Rozza |
| The Global Public-Private Partnership | Katie Carroll |
| U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention | Anna Bowen, Laird Ruth |
| UNICEF | Murat Sahin |
| University of Florida | Rick Rheingans |
| USAID | Christian Holmes, Merri Weinger |
| WASH Advocacy Initiative | Elynn Walter |
| WASHplus | Sarah Fry |
| Water For People Central America | Diana Betancourt |
| WATERisLIFE | Kristine Bender |
| Waterlines | Mark Reimers, Diane Reimers |
| World Vision | Ron Clemmer |
| World Water Relief | Clay Sparrow |

ANNEX 2: Agenda

Day 1

Welcome & Introduction

Peter Lochery, CARE (SWASH+ Partnership)
Prof. James Kiyiapi, Permanent Secretary, Kenya Ministry of Education
Murat Sahin, UNICEF (WASH in Schools Network)
Louis Boorstin, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

The Evidence Base for School WASH: A Panel Discussion

Dr. Anna Bowen, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Dr. Richard Rheingans, University of Florida (SWASH+ Partnership)
Dr. Kepha Ombacho, Kenya Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation
Merri Weinger, U.S. Agency for International Development

Q&A Session: Getting Beyond the Status Quo

Reaching Sustainability at Scale: A Panel Discussion

Leah Rotich, Government of Kenya
Rafael Callejas, Millennium Water Alliance
Katie Carroll, Global Public-Private Partnership for Handwashing
Brooks Keene, CARE (SWASH+ Partnership)

Getting Provocative: Factors of Sustainability at Scale

Presentation and Plenary Synthesis

Day 2

Setting the Stage

Sustainability at Scale in Different Contexts

Recommendations for Constituency Groups

A Time for Reflection

ANNEX 3: Constituency Group Recommendations and Votes

Votes Recommendations Grouped by Similar Statements

National Government will / should . . .

| | |
|----|---|
| 18 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate sector partners of SWASH and ensure participatory accountability • Be more pro-active in coordinating and regulating external assistance • Make available a list of NGO partnerships in WASH programs and their areas of operations |
| 15 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a national enabling framework and strategy that organizations can work within • Create a vision and enabling environment for all stakeholders to work together towards sustainable school WASH • Ensure that mechanisms for joint planning, financing and implementation of SWASH programs are in place |
| 10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and commit to a national plan that is operational, realistic, and includes a system for transparent monitoring • Develop realistic goals based on available research and other data and define roles, responsibilities, and accountability with appropriate monitoring systems |
| 6 | Ensure local government has adequate technical and financial support to match devolved responsibilities |
| 0 | Endeavour to ensure that the right policies are in place that support SWASH |
| 0 | Coordinate and provide leadership in WinS implementation using evidence generated by research |

Local Government will / should. . .

| | |
|---|--|
| 5 | Monitor local NGO projects |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate and strengthen partnerships • Coordinate collaborative efforts with schools |
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure an environment for active participation of civil society, community, etc. |
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build technical and financial capacity for WinS and be responsive and accountable to both national government policies and community needs • Be accountable through monitoring and evaluation |

Researchers will / should...

| | |
|----|---|
| 20 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translate and make accessible findings for use by multiple audiences • Better synthesize existing findings, create more practitioner-friendly (grey literature) research and better engage with systems to support the application of research • Make products of their research available to practitioners • Consolidate the evidence base for school WASH, make it readily available and understandable for appropriate stakeholders and identify areas for additional research • Make findings easily accessible to non-academic audiences |
| 13 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform multidisciplinary, collaborative research that is relevant to both policy and practice • Direct research towards areas where there are gaps in order to inform government policy and planning • Carefully consider research goals: focus on knowledge gaps that advance successful implementation |
| 1 | Improve our understanding of the context-specific financial, behavioral and institutional factors that support WinS at scale |
| 1 | Build capacity around applied research |
| 1 | Generate knowledge and information to make monitoring and evaluation systems work |
| 0 | Fit needs to national efforts, not be driven by current career incentives |

Votes Recommendations Grouped by Similar Statements

Donors will / should . . .

| | |
|----|--|
| 29 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be willing to fund systematic, flexible, long-term approaches rather than just easily quantifiable infrastructure investments • Fund programs that contribute to systemic approaches that deliver scalable, sustainable and demonstratively effective school WASH • Support program vision • Match timeframe of grants to national strategies (right now the funding cycles are too short) • Have long term strategies that support national policies and strategies |
| 8 | Ensure and promote enough funding for sufficient learning, monitoring, evaluation and accountability in school WASH programs |
| 3 | Be more adaptive to make adjustments based on evidence learning |
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure funding addresses national priorities in particular where there are SWASH gaps • Find and supply resources where they have the most influence (geographic identification, systems strengthening, sustaining) |
| 0 | Advocate for school WASH internally and externally to influence other donors and implementers |
| 0 | Fund programs with budget operations and maintenance at school level |

INGOs will / should . . .

| | |
|----|--|
| 22 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with others to ensure a sustainable service delivery system • Coordinate and collaborate with NGOs • Assess the local context and utilize existing research before beginning WASH projects in order to ensure relevance and effectively build local capacity • Engage all actors, including reps from education, health, government, community, schools, research and donors when developing and scaling up WASH in schools projects |
| 10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the development of, and work within, the national framework of the country • Strengthen capacity of governments at appropriate levels • Work with governments (a MUST) • Ensure their strategies are in harmony with national policies and strategies • Support and develop evidence-based national priorities • Engage with the government system, find comparative advantage and prioritize that • Pursue opportunities that support national policy frameworks by making special efforts to inform donors and use extensive policy analysis |
| 8 | Advocate for a national framework for a sustainable provision of WASH in school within a comprehensive national school health policy with appropriate partners in various sectors |
| 1 | Include long-term commitment to particular population issues in programmatic approaches |
| 0 | Advocate for the adoption of best practices |

Small / Local NGOs will / should. . .

| | |
|----|---|
| 10 | Commit to share experiences and evaluation results with other NGOs, governments, research organizations (including negative findings) about which approaches do and do not work in given contexts |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fit programming into WASH strategy • Engage in the government system, find comparative advantage and prioritize that |
| 1 | Provide better mutual support within NGOs |
| 1 | Focus more on sustainability of program over infrastructure |
| 1 | Engage schools and communities to increase demand for WASH |
| 0 | Ensure vertical and horizontal implementation in line with national policies and strategies |
| 0 | Work with community mobilization, galvanize day-to-day engagement |

Communities will / should. . .

| | |
|---|--|
| 5 | Be actively involved in SWASH at all levels, taking ownership of the program |
|---|--|

ANNEX 4: Getting Provocative

Small groups debated their responses to the statements below.

- Sufficient data and knowledge exist to make informed decisions about service delivery.
- There is no need for additional research on the effectiveness (health and educational outcomes) of school WASH.
- It's more important for teachers who provide WASH services to be accountable to students and parents than for them to be accountable upward to line ministries.
- In school WASH interventions delivery of services should always be done by or through those who will be delivering them in the long run.
- School WASH interventions done in only a small number of schools can never hope to create sustainable impact.
- Local governments will never be able to generate enough resources to meet their policy obligations.
- With limited resources, it is better to budget for two latrines with soap and water and cleaning products than six, which enables you to meet the government- required ratio.
- Funds are better spent buying soap and cleaning materials than building new latrines.
- Funding for direct delivery of school WASH services from NGOs and donors undermines the commitment of national governments and communities.
- A national level curriculum is the best way to sustainably change hygiene behaviors at school.

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