

## WASH & LEARN! PROGRAMME

The 'WASH and Learn!' programme integrated community and school WASH projects in a number of specific regions and sub-counties in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. The programme started in March 2016 and ran for three years.

### ENSURING SUSTAINABILITY OF WASH FACILITIES IN SCHOOLS

From 25 to 29 September 2017, the fourth WASH & Learn! meeting was hosted in Uganda by EMESCO. Programme managers from the six local partner organisations participated together with Hester Foppen from Aqua for All, and Simavi's programme officers Selma Hilgersom and Sandra Van Soelen. We reflect back with Simavi on this meeting.



*Participants of the WASH & Learn meeting*

"The main objective of the meeting was for participants to exchange experiences on five different learning themes: Cost Recovery Planning, Risk Assessment, Menstrual Hygiene Management, School Health Clubs, and Water as a Business. The meeting consisted of both plenary and group sessions, allowing all participants to have the chance to share their experiences and learn from each other.



### USING VARIOUS TOOLS

One of the major discussions was focused on ensuring sustainability of the WASH & Learn! programme: how can the WASH facilities that will be constructed within the programme function for at least 15 years upon completion? All partners are using Cost Recovery Planning tools to enable selected schools to explore income generating activities in order to have adequate resources to operate and maintain their WASH facilities. In the meantime, it is also very important to involve the school management as well as the Parent-Teacher Association and local government authorities, reinforcing the sense of ownership within schools and community.

Our partners are also using Risk Assessment tools to help schools identify potential risks surrounding the WASH facilities and search for mitigation measures needed. Simavi is glad to learn that our partners are

trying out these two tools, applying the **FIETS (Financial, Institutional, Environmental, Technical, and Social) sustainability framework**.

Another interesting discussion was about Water as a Business, in terms of its definition and the comparison with the traditional community-based management model. During the workshop, we used the Public-Private Partnership business model canvas to analyse the business case behind pilot projects within the WASH & Learn! programme. This method was highly valued by our partners as it provided a new perspective to understand whether new approaches were sustainable.

## FIELD VISIT



*Crops grown by Kyabasija Primary School*

Outside of the meeting room, during the field visit, we saw a great example of how Kyabasija Primary School successfully used the Cost Recovery Planning tool. In order to raise enough capital to run and maintain the new WASH facilities, the school conducted agricultural activities, planting a variety of crops such as bananas, Irish potatoes, and cabbages. The produce is sold and generates new income for the school which could be used to purchase additional ceramic filters, allowing the students and teachers in the school to enjoy clean drinking water.



“As a school we promise and pledge to sustain what has been achieved because a lot of resources have been used to see this happen. The Operation and Maintenance of WASH facilities is no question, because we already plan for income generation”. – Musoke Jackson, Head Teacher, Kyabasija Primary School

In addition, we were also excited to see the newly constructed latrine block for girls in use. Commissioned by Simavi, District Education Office, and Aqua for All, EMESCO constructed this 30,000 litre Rainwater Harvesting Tank and latrine block for girls’ use. Furthermore, the School Health Club was formed to raise awareness on water, sanitation and hygiene issues in the school.



“There will be no transfers of teachers next year in Kyabasija Primary School to make sure they can fully commit to this project. Furthermore, the Kakumiro District is reserving a small budget to support the activities within this budget; to organise an exchange visit for other schools to see the success in Kyabasija Primary School”. – Mary Kyofuna, District Education Officer



In conclusion, we were very glad to see that the community has been benefiting from the WASH programmes and has been empowered to improve awareness on WASH issues as well as engage with all stakeholders. We could also see that all programme partners are aware of their strengths and are able to identify what they want to learn from each other. In the coming months, Simavi will continue working with the partners and help them achieve their learning objectives to bring more impact to the community.”

More information on the WASH and Learn! programme can be found on [the Simavi website](#).

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## WATER NOT JUST FOR THE SCHOOL, BUT THE WHOLE COMMUNITY

Community Asset Building and Development Action (CABDA) in Kenya is one of the local partners in the WASH and Learn! programme. They use their experience from previous WASH in Schools programmes to inform the current programme.

“When CABDA came here in 2014, schools were on strike. The Technical Support Unit team came and I happened to be here. They found water in two spots. There was water scarcity so it was a blessing,” Quintus, the Head Teacher of Kamolo Primary School in Amagolo Division, Busia County, explains.



According to Quintus, before CABDA provided the water source, 3 out of 10 children got diarrhoea every month. A big number of pupils had scabies and jiggers. But since the water source was constructed, these cases have reduced and there was no more absence from school due to poor health. "Pupils are 100% present," the Head Teacher asserts.

The water source at Kamolo Primary School serves the neighbouring Secondary School and the community and is highly valued as it significantly improves the health and livelihood of the people.

## **WATER – OUR SUGAR**

While most people applaud water for being the source of life, Fred, a Community Health Worker in Amagolo Division Teso North, describes it as sugar. "I have tasted the water CABDA brought and it is sweet." Fred says that just like bees queue for honey the community queues for water at the kiosk, eager to enjoy its benefits. His description is confirmed by the Chairperson of Ajom Women Group, Celin, who expresses that the water has helped the community reduce diseases, improve their livelihoods through agriculture, and have better hygiene conditions.

Susan, a member of the Operation and Maintenance Committee and one of the four people tasked with overseeing the kiosks and collecting water user fees, also praises the initiative. "I am one of the beneficiaries of this water source at Kamolo Primary School. My house is one of those that are connected to the source. In the season when tomatoes typically would not grow because of the sun, I am now able to irrigate and harvest thanks to the new water source."

The Water and Sanitation Committee Secretary also states that the water source has reduced cases of diarrhoea and typhoid in the village which were much more prevalent when the creek was the main source of water.

However, Fred points out that the demand in the area is still not fully met, since the water source is only able to supply one location. The neighbouring villages such as Unyurnyur, Kodedema, and even some households in Kamolo, still use water from the creek. Every morning and evening, the crowd gathers at the kiosks. "I sometimes fear these people will one day get annoyed and break our kiosk because of their frustration towards water – if there is no measure to create more water sources that would allow them to access water easily," he explains.

Nevertheless, the current water source at Kamolo Primary School continues serving the neighbouring secondary school, 13 connected households, and two kiosks and it has truly heralded an impact on bringing development in Amagolo, in terms of improved agricultural environment, increased investment value of lands and, most of all, better health. The experience in Kamolo Primary School has been used by CABDA to implement the WASH and Learn! programme.

## **SIMAVI AND WASH AND LEARN!**

The WASH and Learn! programme integrates community and school WASH projects in three adjacent countries in East Africa; Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. Together with six local NGO partners, Simavi implements this programme, focusing on water supply and sanitation and hygiene behaviour improvements.

Simavi continues to work with communities on creating a positive and enabling environment in which every stakeholder is active and ensuring that people use the WASH services properly.

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## **INCLUSION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, PARENTS, AND STUDENTS IN WASH PROMOTION**

After one-year of WASH and Learn! implementation in Uganda, some progress and reflections have been written down with the support of our local partners EMESCO, HEWASA, and JESE.

### **EMESCO – BUGANGAIZI WEST COUNTY, KIBAALE DISTRICT**

EMESCO provided support to the school health clubs, assisting club members in understanding their purpose and fulfilling their duties. EMESCO also delivered IEC (Information, Education, and Communication) materials in schools, raising awareness on key health issues such as hand washing with soap, proper hygiene practices, safe water chain, and the adoption of 3R approach (Retention, Re-charge, and Re-use).

In the communities, EMESCO formed and trained Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs). After the training, four VSLAs were formed and joined by 77 community members who had started saving since. In addition, selected communities were trained on the safe water chain, aiming at reducing water-related diseases as well as providing options for keeping water safe and clean. In particular, local council leaders greatly supported the programme by mounting social pressure on households without pit latrines, resulting in a significant reduce of cases of open-defecation.



*Sanitation Club members of Kyabasaija Primary School after a training session*

### **HEWASA – RWIMI SUB-COUNTY, KABAROLE DISTRICT**

During the inception meeting, political leaders, technical staffs, and religious and opinion leaders from Rwimi Sub-County gathered and agreed to support the project activities in terms of mobilisation and monitoring. As a result, 126 new latrines were constructed and 67 were under construction.



*A banner displaying the theme of the day*

HEWASA also worked closely with the school management to ensure the progress of the project activities. Parents were mobilised to contribute funds for the construction of WASH facilities and in-kind donation such as excavating latrine and construction materials. Furthermore, HEWASA used the Football for WASH approach to raise awareness in schools and surrounding communities of the importance of water, sanitation and hygiene. Not only boys, but also male teachers and parents were made aware of Menstrual Hygiene Management. This had successfully helped break the silence around menstruation and empower people to talk about this topic comfortably.



*Teams posing for a photo during the Football for WASH competitions*

## **JESE – KISOMORO SUB-COUNTY, KABAROLE DISTRICT**

JESE implemented a number of activities focusing on raising awareness in schools and surrounding communities. JESE developed and distributed 800 copies of hygiene and sanitation educating materials, providing essential information and facilitating discussions. JESE also conducted hygiene and sanitation radio talk shows, in which the local government leadership participated. Some other examples were developing visual promotion material, facilitating parents open-day, training school health clubs to promote WASH information and activities, and organising a football for water tournament.

The impact of these awareness raising activities were already seen. For example, after promoting the ceramic filters for water treatment in schools, many teachers showed interests in getting water filters for their homes too, as they learned that boiling water was actually more expensive when taking into account the time spent and firewood needed. In addition, parents were also empowered to participate in the development of Operation and Maintenance plans and strategies as well as contribute to the funding which enhanced the ownership of WASH facilities in schools and communities. Furthermore, schools developed income generating activities like cassava gardens, crafts selling, and maize gardening.



*JESE staff facilitating discussions with the community*

Here are some takeaways from our partners:

- Forming small clusters of community members was an effective way to scale up hygiene and sanitation practices. Community members were able to learn much faster in an established small group than in a wider community.
- Forming and training school health clubs contributed to the improvement in general sanitation situation in schools. It was rather easy to mobilise children, especially in activities such as conducting hygiene parades, making daily cleaning roster, and creating WASH songs.
- Involving parents and teachers during Menstrual Hygiene Management trainings was a good effort as they showed a positive change of attitude towards providing sanitary pads and supporting their children during menstruation periods.
- Working closely with established local structures such as Community WASH Committees ensured minimal challenges for the programme during implementation. These local assemblies could provide essential support, especially in terms of mobilisation, monitoring, trainings, and mapping out the open defecation areas.
- Involving opinion leaders was particularly important as they had the capacity to influence community members in accepting a positive change.

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## STRUCTURING PROGRAMMES ACCORDING TO COMMUNITY NEEDS

### **TDFT – SECURE LOCAL SUPPORT**

TDFT implements the WASH & Learn! programme in Nzega, Uyui, and Sikonge districts in Tabora Region. The cooperation with the local government is crucial for the long-term sustainability of the programme. Therefore, in the early phase, introduction meetings in all participatory villages were held, which resulted in increasing awareness among the communities. Afterwards, eleven planning meetings were organised to plan interventions. During each of these meetings, participants were asked to write down a number of lessons learned and action plans that could be implemented to improve WASH facilities, in terms of construction, financing, and maintenance. Information collected from these meetings was compiled and used as discussion points with community members and the local government.

In addition, in order to set up Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) and Community Owned Water Supply Organisations (COWSOs), trainings were held to empower members of these groups to be 'Community Behaviour Change Agents' and they were also linked to the activities implemented in schools. Building on existing connections and good relationships with schools and the communities, these local change agents established a foundation to ensure the continuity of the WASH activities beyond the project period.



*Awareness raising on WASH by TDFT*

## **UFUNDIKO – DISTANCE WATER MONITORING SYSTEM**

UFUNDIKO implements the WASH & LEARN! programme in Kongwa and Mpwapwa districts in Dodoma Region. UFUNDIKO has been working with STIClab on developing a distance water monitoring system that provides an opportunity for COWSOs to better manage the water supply as well as keep track of the money collected through their services.

The main body of the system is a water vending machine that automatically delivers water at a certain quantity that matches the amount of money put in. In addition, it is equipped with a digital water meter and an automated hygiene and sanitation promotion system, playing health-related messages recorded by community leaders.

In order to increase the willingness of the community to accept and use the water vending machines, several meetings have been organised with government representatives, COWSO members, and the village assembly.



*The water vending machine with built-in hygiene promotion system of UFUNDIKO*

### **“EVERYONE IS A PRODUCT OF A MISSED PERIOD”**

Although menstruation is a natural and normal part of the reproductive cycle for all women, it is not considered as such in most of the communities where we implement the WASH and Learn! programme. As proper management of the menstruation process is critical to the health of women, Simavi sees menstrual

hygiene management (MHM) as one of the most vital learnings contributing to the success of the WASH and Learn! programme.



Lack of knowledge on menstruation is a major problem that leads to a culture of silence in communities as well as numerous taboos which in turn cause women to feel excluded, ashamed, and stigmatised. Most girls are not told about menstruation before they have their period, not by their family or in school, and therefore they lack proper knowledge and skills to manage their period well. We address this concern and work towards creating an enabling environment by fostering conversation at all levels, including families, schools, communities and governments.



## EFFECTIVE MENSTRUAL HYGIENE MANAGEMENT METHODS

To break the silence on menstruation, our actions included holding awareness and advocacy meetings with school staff and pupils, local leaders, and government officials to get buy-in. We note their experiences and build on their views to clarify purposes, and draw up a targeted campaign that involves them, enabling them to become advocates.

Other key actions include training School Health Clubs on MHM promotion, involving women in MHM advocacy, sharing informative education materials about MHM, and motivating parliament and relevant government structures to advocate for MHM in schools and communities.

In addition, it is critical to create an enabling environment in which girls and women are able to manage their menstruation by ensuring relevant facilities such as clean toilets, clean water and soap, space for girls to clean themselves, sanitary materials, painkillers, and proper ways to dispose of used sanitary pads, are available.



## MAKING REUSABLE MENSTRUAL PADS

Ensuring the availability of sanitary materials is essential to the success of MHM. Reusable menstrual pads made of cotton are identified as the most affordable and healthy options, compared with menstrual cups and disposable pads. We carry out programme activities to train girls and women in making their own pads with cotton material, soft cotton towels, and needle and thread.



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## THE POWER OF INVOLVING BOYS IN MENSTRUAL HYGIENE MANAGEMENT

Lamus is a 12-year-old student at St. John's Primary School where HEWASA, one of our partner organisations, implements the Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) activities as part of the WASH and Learn! programme. Lamus participated in the training conducted by HEWASA on making the Reusable Menstrual Pads (RUMPs) and gladly brought this piece of knowledge back home, teaching his mother and sister what he learned in school. "My mother is a poor woman. So with these skills of making RUMPs, I want her to learn how to make pads for herself and reduce the cost of buying pads from the shops," said Lamus.



*12-year-old Lamus giving instruction on how to make pads in his community*

When Lamus introduced the idea of making RUMPs to his mother, Maureen, she was impressed with how simple it is to make a reusable pad. “I have always used pieces of my old clothes without minding the hygiene issues. This has always been a challenge because the fabrics I was using are not comfortable or reliable. Now I use RUMPs which are comfortable and I feel confident that I do not need to worry about hygiene problems,” says Maureen. Furthermore, she taught five of her friends how to make RUMPs and together they plan to introduce RUMPs in women groups as well as offer counselling services to young girls in the village.

In the communities where we implement the WASH & Learn! programme, menstruation is seen as women’s territory which is secretive and shouldn’t be discussed in public or in the presence of men. This perception has led to stigmatization and segregation of women and girls in society. Girls from low-income families often resort to using unhygienic rags and cloths, which could cause infections. Moreover, it is alleged that some girls engage in transactional sex in order to obtain money to purchase sanitary pads, putting themselves at the risk of early pregnancies and contracting diseases such as HIV.

HEWASA’s promotion of proper MHM practices involves sensitizing people on the concept of menstruation and enlightening them about the role of all community members, especially men and boys, in managing menstruation through affordable means.



*Lamus facilitating a Reusable Menstrual Pads training of a women's group in his village*

Everyone deserves a dignified life. Bringing boys and men on board is essential to breaking the silence around menstruation and achieving the goal that no one is left behind.

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## USING CLUSTER APPROACH TO DRIVE SUSTAINABLE WASH IMPROVEMENT

To achieve the project goal, different approaches have been implemented both in schools and the communities. HEWASA concludes that the Cluster System, which aims at strengthening the capacity and

commitment of households within a small group of community members, is one of the most effective approaches. HEWASA has adapted this approach from EMESCO, another local NGO partner in the WASH & Learn! programme. Some progress and reflections have been shared with the support of HEWASA.

## **MAIN TAKEAWAYS**

- Direct involvement of the community members is essential to ensure the sustainability of WASH promotion.
- Clustering method fosters a better learning environment and helps improve the general health condition among community members.
- Demand-driven changes are the keys to successful WASH improvements in the communities. Therefore the sensitization process is very important.

## **ESTABLISHING THE CLUSTERS**

Using the Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) approach as the first step, community members were made aware of the negative effects caused by poor WASH practices, such as open defecation and improper use of latrines at homes. After the triggering exercises, sanitation committees, consisting of representatives elected by community members, were formed to oversee the progress of WASH activities in the communities.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the cluster approach, households in Kajumiro A, Kakinga, and Kanyamukale villages were selected as pilot communities and clustered in groups of 25, with the help of three sanitation committees. Five clusters were formed based on the distance between houses. In each cluster, a household head was chosen to be the cluster head. The selection was made by cluster members based on exemplary leadership skills and the level of WASH practices in his or her home.

## **STRENGTHENING DIRECT INVOLVEMENT OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

Cluster heads are responsible for monitoring the progress of improvement in WASH activities in their clusters as well as offering technical support and advice when needed. Cluster heads are told in advance that their roles are completely voluntary with no material reward and that the main goal is to improve the WASH condition in their communities.

Cluster members are tasked to adopt the practices of households that are identified to be model homes, which must meet the requirements of owning a strong and clean latrine, a drying rack, shelters for animals, a rubbish pit, and a hand washing facility. In order to keep track of changes, HEWASA designed a follow-up form for cluster heads to use when conducting routine inspections in households.



*A HEWASA officer explaining to a cluster head about the Hygiene and Sanitation follow-up form*

## **FOSTERING SUSTAINABLE CHANGES**

Take Kayembe cluster as an example. All 25 households constructed latrines and installed washing stations near the latrines. In particular, two latrines were constructed with the help of cluster members for two households headed by a child and an elderly widow respectively.

***“I am grateful for the support that the members of this community offered me by constructing a new latrine for me because I am old, weak and not able to construct one on my own,” said Kangangye, an elderly widow.***



*Kangangye using the tippy tap that was constructed in front of her new latrine*

All cluster members showed great passion towards WASH interventions and met twice a month regularly to discuss the progress in their homes and how they might support those who were not able to make improvements.

In addition, two supporting groups have been formed by women who have received training on making Reusable Menstrual Pads and liquid soap in order to be able to sustain proper hygiene practices in the communities even after the project finishes.

Furthermore, by providing community members with training on business skills, such as marketing and financial management, HEWASA has fostered an entrepreneurial environment among the communities and enabled a group of locals to generate income by offering sanitation services, such as latrine building, pit digging, and pit emptying.

Finally, the cluster approach has enhanced men's involvement in WASH improvement. It had always been a challenge to increase men's commitment in changing behaviours in their homes. Now as household heads in the cluster, men are tasked to ensure that their homes are keeping with the standards.

***“When my wife told me that our home had been included in Kayembe zone and she had been made the head, I had to work together with her to improve the hygiene in our home,” said Magezi.***



*Magezi standing in front of a tippy tap that he was taught to construct*

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## COST RECOVERY PLANNING: AN ESSENTIAL TOOL TO HELP SCHOOLS ENSURE LONG-TERM SUCCESS OF WASH INVESTMENTS

When applied by the stakeholders the tool helps them identify the costs and revenue from a WASH investment as well as maintaining and sustaining it and the gap between the two. Often the government funding that schools receive is not enough to cover all the expenses incurred. The tool also looks at the required activities/actions to implement, maintain and sustain the investment levels.

The **FIETS sustainability principles** are applied creating a collaborative process for stakeholders to learn the objectives and importance of cost recovery and how best it can be achieved with regard to Financial, Institutional, Environmental, Technological and Social support systems. During brainstorming sessions, the stakeholders identify requirements, opportunities, challenges and activities, and plan for them.

This is a collaborative process. Community members gather together to learn the objectives and the importance of cost recovery plans. Then, during brainstorming sessions, they are to identify income-generating opportunities and draw up plans.

### Cost Recovery Planning Tool in Practice

Below we list some components of a CRP structure. These items are just examples and may differ per school.

#### 1. Preliminary Information

- School Information
  - School name, school location, contact person, contact details...etc.
  - Beneficiaries
    - Population (gender specific) of students, teachers, and other community users.
  - School hardware facilities
    - Nature and types of functional latrine, toilets, handwashing taps, water facilities...etc.

#### 2. Annual Revenue

- Relevant income for WASH operation and maintenance
  - Government contribution
  - Parent contribution
  - NGO contribution
  - Other sponsors
  - Income generating activities

#### 3. Annual Cost

- Water – mainly related to repair, maintenance, and replacement as well as operational cost such as electricity
  - Tap points
  - Piped water
  - Water tanks
  - Water pumps
  - Water treatment system
  - Rainwater harvesting
  - Other cost
  - Sanitation
    - Wage of cleaners, handyman...etc.
    - Sanitation blocks repair (locks, vent pipes, door hinges, wall painting, pots, floor, holes, replacement of doors...etc.)
    - Emptying pits, toilet paper, sanitary towels, detergent, cleaning materials...etc.
    - Other cost
    - Hygiene
      - Wash basins (soaps, repairs, maintenance, replacement...etc.)
      - Extracurricular activities to promote hygiene practices
      - Emptying and collection of solid waste

4. General cost

- Other cost
- School WASH management committee (meetings, training, transportation, food, hardware, administration...etc.)
- Water quality testing

### Cost Recovery Rate

The next step is for the school to calculate its cost recovery rate (REVENUE/COST 100%) in order to assess challenges, draw up cost recovery plans, and explore potential income generating activities. There are three possible scenarios:

1. Revenues < Costs (cost recovery rate between 0-100%)
2. Revenues = Costs (cost recovery rate is exactly 100%)
3. Revenues > Costs (cost recovery rate is higher than 100%)

For these three scenarios, a yardstick for the viability of cost recovery is set to inform the allocation and use of revenue collected for WASH investment maintenance and sustenance.

When the cost recovery rate from revenue collected is low, this implies inadequate revenue allocation and use of the WASH investment. When the cost recovery rate is higher than the revenue, there is a threat that the income generating initiative is not meeting the WASH goals in the long term and they need to reconsider the strategy. When revenue and costs are equal, then the income generated meets the cost recovery needs.

### Lessons Learned

During the process, we have also encountered some challenges and here are some takeaways from one of our local partners, **CABDA**, who implements the programme in Kenya.

1. Cost recovery implementation varies with the resources, opportunities and challenges in a given location and school. Therefore, it works best when customized to the aspirations of a given setting.
2. Different schools have different costs for the same item. We need to be aware that the market value differs even for neighbouring schools.
3. The involvement of all stakeholders during the entire project implementation, from planning to evaluation, is highly important to ensure the success.
4. Schools are not very innovative when it comes to income-generating activities. This could be due to general low levels of literacy as well as a strong influence of donors on WASH. It is normal that schools are encouraged to brainstorm ideas, but they hope that donors will come to their rescue when there are difficulties. The government policy is also playing a role here: when education is free, parents are reluctant to contribute and so is the community. Schools also shy away from private initiatives to generate income
5. Only a few schools have viable income generating projects that related to agriculture, water selling, and the use of human waste as fertilizer as well as materials for biogas.
6. Cost recovery is a novel tool and so few schools have tried it out. Therefore, few schools particularly WASH & Learn schools have viable income. There is a need to scale up the application of the tool to more schools as well as urge its use in government programming for schools

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## WASH & LEARN: A PARTNERSHIP BEYOND BOUNDARIES

WASH & Learn! is a programme that brings together the skills and expertise of different organisations and thereby unlocks a great amount of creativity and well-designed WASH sustainability mechanisms. It is an ongoing and unique partnership of Aqua for All, Simavi and six East African NGOs. I already noticed the enthusiasm of Tanzanian organisation TDFT and UFUNDIKO when I started working there in 2016.

However, in the WASH & Learn! meeting that was hosted by EMESCO in Kibaale, Uganda last year, I captured the fun and substantial benefits of joining forces. Learning is not considered something that is picked up by coincidence. Simavi's regional learning coordinator Linda Lilian captures the most important skills and points for development per organisation and works closely together with all partners to maximize

the learning process within the programme. Additionally, valuable lessons are shared among the partners via different communication channels (WhatsApp has proven to be quite effective here).



There are two components of the programme that I came to value in particular; the systematic approach to achieving sustainability and the exploration of new business development within the NGOs. Two examples of the tools that are developed and used within the programme are the Risk Assessment and the Cost Recovery Planning.

### **Using Tools**

The risk assessment creates an opportunity to sit together and think about potential risks that can come up before, during and after the construction of WASH facilities at schools. This enables reviewing potential risks and developing ways to mitigate these risks well in advance. It also ensures that responsibilities are clear and agreed upon. A clear sign of the usefulness of these tools is that local governments have started to promote these tools beyond the scope of the programme as well.

The Cost Recovery Planning tool helps schools find opportunities to create income to invest in WASH facilities. Partner organisations EMESCO, HEWASA and JESE in Uganda have for example supported schools in starting up their craft production and agricultural activities that are sold to generate income, while TDFT has initiated the construction and operation of toilets. Kenyan partner CABDA has experience in linking football with investments in WASH facilities. It should be noted here that the primary activities of the schools are always given priority, and that all activities are done on a voluntary basis and that school management, students, parents, the communities and local government stakeholders are supporting the activities. Often the Cost Recovery activities fit within the life skills training curriculum of the schools. Pupils can learn valuable life skills from the cost recovery planning activities, such as farming and craftwork. In Uganda, time is reserved for these activities in the curriculum.

Innovation-wise, a lot of new things have been done by the partners. Multiple partners have been working on new ways of water delivery – making use of digital payment systems, newly-designed water vending machines by UFUNDIKO that have built-in speakers to share the latest (health) messages to the community and ICT monitoring platforms that provide real-time insight into the status of the water points.

But, wait. There is more. One of the things that has resulted from working together is sharing practical lessons that go beyond the pre-defined activities. For example, all partners have taken up the making of reusable menstrual pads and providing information about menstrual health.

So – all is gold and groovy? No, it is not. As with every programme, there are challenges. Lacking capacities at schools to properly manage WASH at their premises and creating diversified business models for water supply with the support of Aqua for All are among the hurdles we face. However, if there is one thing I have learned from being involved in this programme: WASH and learning together is far more productive than WASH and learning by yourself. With the trust and expertise of all the partners combined – I

am very confident that we can drive positive change. I look forward to continue working in this partnership in 2018 and I am excited to see what the next steps will be after the programme ends.

## CASE STUDY: COST RECOVERY STRATEGY ENSURING CAPITAL CONTRIBUTION AND WATER AVAILABILITY IN DRY SEASONS

Under JESE's facilitation, participants such as as Parents-Teachers Association (PTA), School Management Committee (SMC), children, and community members were enabled to clearly outline the costs, revenues, and intended income-generating activities, which are essential to determine the cost recovery planning strategy. In February 2017, parents and SMC agreed to start a treasury fund for WASH activities in the school, collecting contributions from various sources, including the Universal Primary Education (UPE) grant, parents' donations, and sales revenue from income generating activities, such as beans and maize farming, tree planting, and hand-made crafts selling.

Kisomoro Primary School has generated great progress since having conducted the cost recovery planning. For example, the school was able to afford four shipments of building materials as well as excavate two pits for the construction of latrines. The school also has cash reserves which can be used to purchase water in a dry season. Furthermore, the school plans to construct a gravity-flow pipe system and connect it to the water tank.

### Cost Recovery Plan of Kisomoro Primary School

Country/Village: Uganda/Kisomoro Primary School			
School: Kisomoro Primary school			
Enrollment: Boys: Girls:	Contact: Cell Phone:		
Head Teacher: Tadeo Akisomoro	Designation: Health Club Member		
Information Provided by:	Contact: Cell Phone:		
Please select: Very rare			
Categories on specific action stated?			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Selling crafts</li> <li>- Soliciting for contributions from Sponsors like JESE, Area member of Parliaments and ministers</li> </ul>			
Where there specific cost involved implementing this action? If so approximately how much and approximately how much in the annual benefit/usage? Please indicate how long this action/commitment will be sustained.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kisomoro PTA has ventured into crafts making that it showcases during parents days and on market days around the surrounding market of Nyatigumba. Crafts include baskets, mats, weaving sticks among others. Crafts are made by the pupils using local materials available such as papirus, millet stems, and wood.</li> </ul>			
			
The school projected target prices are as follows:			
Item	Price		
Small size mat	2000/-		
Big Size mat	3000/-		
Small baskets	2000/-		
Big baskets	3000/-		
Small weaving sticks	2000/-		
Big Weaving sticks	3,000/-		
Worst case scenario profit projection			
Kisomoro PTA intends to put out 3 sales per year. Uganda curriculum has 3 terms			
Item	Unit Price	Quantity	Total price
Small size mat	2,000	25	500,000
Big Size mat	3,000	20	600,000
Small baskets	2,000	20	400,000
Big baskets	3,000	20	600,000
Small weaving sticks	2,000	20	400,000
Big weaving sticks	3,000	20	600,000
Total			3,000,000
The school intends to use projected earnings to buy materials for construction of proposed lined pit latrines and ferns cement fans.			
The same projected earnings shall cater for operation and maintenance of the school's WASH facilities.			
Sustainability strategies			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The school intends to continue to train pupils on doing hand work in crafts for continuous sale</li> <li>- The school intends to use proceeds from garden of Irish potatoes and cassava for future operation and maintenance for WASH facilities in school</li> </ul>			

Note: The local currency is the Uganda Shilling (1 Uganda Shilling equals 0.00023 Euro)

Cost recovery is never an easy subject to discuss with local community members because it involves making plans for the unforeseeable future as well as money. The majority of the parents are peasants who solely depend on their crops for survival. Therefore parents' contribution to school activities is usually kept minimal during bad seasons.

However, it is essential to have parents engaged in the cost recovery planning right from the beginning. By including parents' mandatory contribution into the treasury fund, it creates a sense of involvement and responsibility for them to participate, construct, and maintain WASH facilities.

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### LOCAL PASTOR BECOMING CHANGE AGENT UNDER THE CLUSTER APPROACH

In August 2017, JESE, one of the local NGO partners in the WASH & Learn! programme, selected households in Kyamuhemba and grouped them into 14 clusters, 10 households each. Kanwari's cluster took immediate actions to intervene in Kanwari's hygiene practices as the condition of her household was way behind that of most members.



Kanwari's latrine was in a bad condition, almost falling apart and without any handwashing facility. Her kitchen was only covered by a grass roof and without walls. The rain would pour in while she was cooking. She never had a bathroom for showering. Also, it was not customary for her to boil water before drinking it.



Together with Kanwari, the cluster members managed to construct a decent pit latrine, rubbish pit, kitchen, and a dish rack for her, for free, establishing a good example of having proper sanitation and hygiene facilities which contribute to the health condition of the whole community.



With these sanitation facilities in place, Kanwari has started good hygiene practices as well. For example, she boils water before drinking. Moreover, she has been a successful change agent herself since then. She accompanies her fellow cluster members to conduct household inspections, proudly sharing her own experience wherever she goes. During pastoral visits and church gatherings, Kanwari utilises her role and sensitises other community members on the importance of sanitation. As a result of her promotion, together with the effort made by cluster members, 15 households have adopted good hygiene practices, constructing 15 new or improved latrines and dish racks.



From our experience, the cluster approach is one of the most effective methods to empower communities to acquire appropriate WASH facilities. To ensure that the clusters are sustained for a long time, JESE has integrated the Village Health Teams, a local authority entity, to monitor the progress on a monthly basis, taking this initiative to the sub-county level.



## WASH AND LEARN! AND SCHOOL HEALTH CLUBS

*"My work has been simplified because by the time I arrive at school, the pupils are already cleaning their latrines and litter in the school compound is being picked up, I only start by supervising the children. They are mobilized by the SHC members every morning"* - an account of Busingye Erastus, a health teacher at St. John's Nsongya.

Organizing School Health Clubs (SHCs) was a new initiative from the WASH & Learn! programme, implemented by one of the Simavi's local partners, HEWASA in Uganda.



School health clubs were established with an aim to educate the children (8-15 years) on WASH knowledge and rights; to foster a change in the communal habits and thinking. Such clubs were established in the Rwiimi sub county of Uganda where four primary schools, St. John's Nsongya, Kitere, Kakooga and Ntambi, participated in the programme. Students from lower to upper primary standards participated and in total thirty-five such clubs were established. Student training on topics ranging from personal hygiene, classroom hygiene and cleanliness in the school surroundings was conducted. They were informed about the importance of hygienic maintenance of facilities like latrines and rain water tanks to prevent the spread of infections. Interestingly, the students used the effective medium of poems and drama to spread awareness on WASH practices like handwashing with soap, water treatment using simple techniques such as SODIS (Solar Water Disinfection) amongst their peers and the school staff. Educational training was carried out by school teachers who were trained as patrons by HEWASA. Additionally, managerial assistance was provided by the School Management Committee, Parent Teachers Association, staff and administration of the school.

At the end of this successful exercise, the idea that children can serve as powerful advocates for promoting change in the community can be propagated.

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## WASH-BASED BUSINESSES

Business schemes such as **prepaid water meters, water kiosks, automatic prepaid water meters and water vending machines** were implemented by local partners like EMESCO and UFUNDIKO in Uganda and Tanzania respectively.



EMESCO uses a community-based approach in the operation, maintenance, monitoring and management of the water facilities developed through WASH-based business models. Such an approach guarantees good public inclusion and this can be further used to promote advocacy of the new WASH reforms. EMESCO started a Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) which requires the community to make a capital contribution to construct a water resource and then gather funds from users for the proper maintenance of the resource. At times, a new water resource can also be constructed from the savings gathered and the revenue earned through collected funds, thus giving a boost to the rural economy and increasing the ability of villagers in financial management.

**Prepaid water meters** are used to monitor the water usage by citizens and charge them accordingly. For **water kiosks**, caretakers are appointed at water pumps to monitor the water usage and collect funds from the users. This money is saved, out of which, one share is allocated to CABDA and the rest is used in construction of new WASH facilities. CABDA supports water users with funds for VSLA from which soft loans are given to boost the livelihood of the community members.



**Automatic prepaid water meters** were also installed in a few regions to avoid human interference and tampering of the units.

**Water vending machines** are run as a joint effort of UFUNDIKO, STIC Lab and the local village government where in customers put money in the machine and water is dispensed. There is a display screen where water and sanitation messages are run to spread awareness within the community.

However, certain challenges are faced in the proper functioning of these WASH-based business services. At times, the water meters are broken down, tampered with, vandalized, and are out of order. In the upcoming years, our focus is on addressing these challenges and providing a solution.



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## PODCAST: INVOLVING LOCAL COMMUNITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE WASH IN SCHOOLS

The importance of WASH in schools has been globally recognised by its inclusion in the SDG targets 4.a, 6.1 and 6.2. WASH coverage in schools is not adequate. In Sub-Saharan Africa, 53% of schools have limited drinking water services, 14% have limited sanitation services and 21% have basic hygiene services. ([Drinking Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Schools: Global baseline report 2018](#))

In episode 20 of WASH Talk, host Andy Narracott talks about WASH in schools with [Linda Lilian](#), Knowledge Management and Learning Specialist at Simavi Uganda and [Machtelt Oudenhuijzen](#), Senior Programme Manager at Aqua for All and lead of the Football for Water programme.

Linda is involved in the WASH and Learn! programme which Simavi is leading with six local partners in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. Linda shares examples on generating income to maintain facilities in schools, involving school leaders, communities, parents and children. Policies differ per country so context specific solutions need to be found. Machtelt as lead of Football for Water, a unique programme in Ghana, Kenya and Mozambique, explains that it is difficult to motivate local stakeholders. Therefore, they advise on appropriate design, easy to clean facilities that are affordable and safe for children. Football for Water uses the game of football to instigate behaviour change in children and teaches them life skills.

[Listen to the podcast on SoundCloud](#)



## WINNING SUSTAINABILITY STRUCTURES FOR WASH FACILITIES IN SCHOOLS

A four-day learning meeting (September 29 – 1 October 2018) was an opportunity for the partners to reflect on the efforts undertaken in the three year WASH and Learn! programme to attain sustainable WASH models in schools and communities in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania.



The meeting was attended by participants from partner organisations TDFT, UFUNDIKO, EMESCO, JESE, HEWASA, CABDA and Maji Milele, as well as Simavi and Aqua for All. The learning meeting utilized various tools for discussion, including organisations auditioning their best practices over the past three years, for further guidance on the way forward.

The conversation around how the risk assessment/mitigation and cost recovery tools were adapted to meet the stakeholders' (schools') operational capacity demonstrated both successes and challenges. Success was noted on the premise that all stakeholders (government, school management, teachers, parents, local leaders, pupils) were encouraged to participate and contribute during the programme and even after the programme. The main challenge was that some stakeholders were not active in contributing during the

programme. Introducing the sustainability aspect in existing structures proved a winner to foster active engagement of various stakeholders. This would continue the WASH and Learn! programme efforts post the funding period and would contribute to sustainability, especially of the constructed WASH facilities in the schools and communities. The structures partners worked with included Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) for TDFT, EMESCO, JESE and HEWASA, Water User Committees for CABDA, and Community Owned Water Supply Organisations (COWSOs) for UFUNDIKO. In these structures partners created the will among stakeholders to support the best practices in attaining sustainable WASH in schools and the community. This was done by engaging them in the programme and allowing them to have first-hand experience with how the sustainability tools worked and what they could achieve. All partners also worked closely with Local Government Authorities to get them involved in the programme, e.g. in selection of the intervention areas, but also in project activities and joint monitoring exercises.

During the learning meeting, partners had the opportunity to explore emerging innovations they had initiated during the course of the programme like the use of community clustering for sustainable Community-Led Total Sanitation and also sustainability measures including boosting community income for water as a business to be successful. The community clustering approach was used by especially the Ugandan partners within the WASH & Learn programme to move from CLTS to open defecation free communities. More information about this approach can be found in the article [Using cluster approach to drive sustainable WASH improvement](#).

The meeting reviewed the evaluations undertaken in year one and two, reflecting on progress made so far. It also forecasted the next step for partners for WASH & Learn! programme, especially on how the programme will be evaluated in the coming months. In conclusion, the learning meeting provided interesting insights in what works well, and where additional attention is needed. The endline evaluation that will be conducted in the coming months will give more insights in the results that the WASH & Learn! programme achieved.