



A group of children at Kapan town kindergarten in Syunik marz, Armenia. Photo Credit: Save the Children

Operation and Maintenance Financing for School WASH Facilities in Armenia

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Armenia

Armenia is a mountainous country in Western Asia with a land area of 29,743 km² and a population of 2.984 million people (population density – 105 people/km²). It is a lower middle income country (GDP - 10.88 billion US\$, GDP per capita – 3646.7 US\$ and GNI per capita – 3,810 US\$) (World Bank, 2014).

Administratively, the country is divided into 10 provincial regions (called *Marz*), the city of Yerevan and 915 community units. *Marz* governors are responsible for implementing regional policies for education and urban development. The Ministry of Territorial Administration and Emergency Situations (MTAES) is responsible for communities, and each community is under the supervision of the provincial municipality. The country is mostly urban (64%), although agriculture is still a large part of the economy.

In Armenia, the former centralized education system has been replaced by a decentralized system with emphasis on school self-management, initiated in 1996. The education system is comprised of non-compulsory pre-school education for children aged 1-6 years; compulsory (basic) general education, which includes primary education (grades 1 to 4) and lower secondary education (grades 5 to 9), and upper general secondary education (high school), which lasts two years (grades 10 to 12).

I. Executive Summary

In Armenia, the State investment in primary and secondary schools comes from the national Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES). Funding is allocated to provincial municipalities or to the City Municipality in Yerevan, where it may be directed toward school improvement activities, including the construction, operation and maintenance of WASH facilities. Other than State funding, schools receive occasional support from Community Councils, various local and international NGOs and rarely from the private sector. Small contributions from the School Management Council (SMC) are used to purchase general supplies, including soap and toilet paper.

Good Practices: Armenia has the institutional and policy framework and the financing mechanisms to promote

WASH in schools. The construction of new WASH facilities in schools is managed by provincial departments of education and urban development, who extend water and sewage pipelines, bring services provided by the Armenian Water and Sewerage Company (AWSC) into school premises and construct drinking water and handwashing stations, as well as flush toilets. Payment of utilities is the school's responsibility, and a manual on school structures and protection includes sanitary norms for school buildings, including for toilets, water supply and waste disposal. The *State Education Development Program Plan 2011-2015* prioritizes the need for better logistics for water supply, sewerage and heating, while a State Order on the calculation of financing of the public secondary educational institutions includes a maintenance amount for utilities and services. Financial allocations given to schools to pay the salaries of teaching and non-teaching staff (including cleaners) are calculated based on school population, as well as on a minimum maintenance amount required to cover school utilities and services. Case-study schools, which were NGO supported, reported having a general maintenance budget, an SMC as well as student councils and a government paid cleaner for daily cleaning of the school yard. Overall, school WASH facilities are functional and clean.

Areas for improvement: The current sanitary norms for school buildings do not comprehensively include guidance for the O&M of WASH facilities, and are therefore under revision by the Ministry of Health to include more details, such as guidelines on access to and maintenance of toilets, handwashing facilities and waste disposal. Financial allocations to schools for maintenance do not include guidance for budgeting WASH activities (e.g. which items to budget, how much to budget). As a result, maintenance funds do not have a budget line for WASH and are used depending on school needs. In schools with small student populations, staff costs end up being only partially covered by maintenance funds due to restrictive budgets. Government officials noted that due to other priorities, as little as 1% (279,670 AMD or 682 US\$) of total school allocations were used for maintenance. Amounts for WASH O&M were even lower. Officials in case-study schools reporting a median of 0.2% (roughly 6,478 AMD or 15 US\$ at least) of the maintenance budget being used for WASH. Therefore, without SMC or NGO support, the schools cannot meet their costs for toilet cleaning and handwashing

supplies or small maintenance and repairs. Provincial governments do not have a system for routine monitoring of WASH facilities in schools, and there are no indicators of school WASH in the Education Management Information System (EMIS). This provides schools little incentive to maintain facilities. Although schools supported by NGOs have renovated facilities, with gaps in maintenance, improvements may not last much after NGO support ends.

Recommendations by key informants to improve the O&M of WASH facilities in schools are as follows:

- Improve the national sanitary hygiene norms for school buildings with better guidance on WASH O&M planning and budgeting.
- Add an amount for WASH to the formula for estimating school annual budgets, so that schools are in a better position to allocate funds for WASH.
- A separate sub-line item for WASH under general maintenance would help schools in planning and prioritizing WASH.
- A functional monitoring system that relies on schools and local government to ensure facilities are clean, functional and well-maintained.
- Consistent cooperation between the government and national/ international NGOs for WASH in schools and capacity building in O&M.
- Emphasis on hygiene education in schools and awareness campaigns in communities.

Key Indicators for WASH, Education, Finance and Gender

WASH Indicators	Percentage
Estimated urban population coverage, improved drinking water sources ¹ (2015)	100
Estimated rural population coverage, improved drinking water sources ¹ (2015)	100
Estimated urban population coverage, improved sanitation facility ¹ (2015)	96
Estimated rural population coverage, improved sanitation facility ¹ (2105)	78
Estimated water coverage in schools ² (2013)	92
Estimated sanitation coverage in schools ² (2013)	86
Education Indicators	Percentage
Primary education attainment rate ³ (2010)	100
Total net enrolment rate, primary, both sexes ⁴ (2007)	92.93
Total net enrolment rate, lower secondary, both sexes ⁴ (2007)	93.23
Finance Indicators ⁴	Percentage
Government expenditure on primary education as % of GDP (2012)	0.76
Government expenditure on secondary education as % of GDP (2012)	1.61
Expenditure on primary as % of total government expenditure (all sectors – 2012)	3.16
Expenditure on secondary as % of total government expenditure (all sectors – 2012)	6.73
Expenditure on primary as % of total government expenditure on education (2012)	23.07
Expenditure on secondary as % of total government expenditure on education (2012)	49.15
Government expenditure per primary student (2012)	543.4 US\$
Government expenditure per secondary student (2012)	594.8 US\$
Aid Indicators ³	US\$
Total aid to education (2012)- Armenia	42 million
Total aid to basic education (2012)- Armenia	9 million
Gender Parity Index (GPI) Indicators ⁴	Integer
Total net enrolment rate, primary, gender parity index (2007)	1.10
Total net enrolment rate, lower secondary, gender parity index (2007)	1.12

¹ UNICEF/WHO –Progress on sanitation and drinking water-2015

² UNICEF- Advancing WASH in Schools Monitoring- 2015

³ UNESCO- EFAGMR- 2015

⁴ UNESCO- education data set- 2015

2. Methods

- **Documentation review:** A desk review of relevant national government documents, websites, Save the Children desk review responses, and development partner documents and websites.
- **Key informant interviews with government and development partners:** Interviews with government officials from the National Ministry of Education and Science, the National Ministry of Urban development, and from the Armavir and Aragatsotn provincial governor's office. Discussions with staff from Save the Children Armenia.
- **School visits, comprising interviews, observation surveys and local shop visits:** Interviews and observation surveys at 10 government schools; nine were from grades 1-12, while one was a primary school (grades 1-4). All schools (five in Aragatsotn province, one in Gegharkunik and four in Armavir- see map) were rural and single shift. Data was collected in late 2014. The number of students in schools was between 69 and 305, with the median school size being 184 students.



Map of Armenia highlighting Aragatsotn, Armavir and Gegharkunik where schools were visited.

All case study schools were supported by an NGO (Save the Children) between 2011 and 2013 with renovations to

the school toilets and the provision of running water supplies, functioning sewerage systems and health education. Toilets were co-financed between Save the Children and the Community Office. Conversion rate used in the case study: 1 AMD = 0.00244 US\$ (Source: Oanda Currency Converter, Sep 6, 2014).

3. Resource Setting for WASH in Schools

3.1 Agencies Investing in WASH in Schools

In Armenia, the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) is the main agency that invests in WASH in schools. For construction and rehabilitation of facilities, the State MoES coordinates with provincial counterparts of the MoES and the Ministry of Urban Development (MoUD). Provincial municipalities and schools buy water from the Armenian Water and Sewerage Agency (AWSC), a company that manages water production, treatment and distribution, as well as wastewater treatment, and is regulated by the State Ministry of Territorial Administration and Emergency Situations (MoTAES). Solid waste collection is managed by local Community Offices under the MoTAES. Provincial municipalities sometimes implement urgent school repairs and constructions, and, infrequently, Community Councils may do so as well. In addition, national and international NGOs, as well as school management councils (SMCs), student organizations and the private sector invest in WASH in schools.

Construction and Rehabilitation

- The State MoTAES contracts the AWSC to provide public water and waste water services, including maintenance of its engineering network. The utility system provided only reaches to the school property, after which point it is the responsibility of the MoES and the school to extend the water pipeline and sewerage to school facilities.
- Once the MoES has received funding approval from the national Ministry of Finance, it is the responsibility of the provincial government to undertake the construction of WASH facilities. When a provincial MoES identifies new schools for construction, the provincial MoUD announces tenders for construction of schools and its WASH facilities. The provincial MoUD determines the design and budgets for the construction of schools and their WASH facilities. The

water supply in schools is largely piped water and toilets are primarily piped flushing toilets.

- Throughout Armenia, national and international NGOs, such as World Vision, Children of Armenia Fund, Save the Children and Armenian Missionary Association of America run small-scale projects to support school WASH. The projects mainly include the construction and repair of water, handwashing and toilet facilities. Schools can directly approach NGOs for assistance on a variety of problems, including WASH in schools (Save the Children, UNICEF, 2014). SMCs, student organizations and the private sector also support WASH in schools with training, contributions of cash, labor and materials.

Water, waste disposal and hygiene services

- The provincial municipality buys services from AWSC for centralized supply; however, once a school has water and latrine facilities, it is the responsibility of the school to pay for the water supply.
- Solid waste in the community is managed by the local Community Office. The Community Office collects household waste and waste from institutions including schools. Waste from schools is collected by the Waste Service, but in remote areas, schools dispose waste by burying it in pits and burning.
- The Provincial governor's office includes hygiene education in annual in-service training for teachers. Occasionally, NGOs also support health and hygiene promotion in schools. Provision of soap, paper-towels and hygiene education materials could be part of this support.

Maintenance and monitoring

- The provincial municipality is also responsible for school WASH maintenance, including disinfection and fixing problems with water and sewerage pipes in public spaces. They might also help with financing of major repair works on school grounds. Provincial governor offices also directly implement urgent school construction projects using the State budget.
- Community councils normally do not support schools with maintenance; however, in some cases, if there is a request from schools, they may help with major repair works on school grounds for both water and sewerage. For example, the Community Development Program, is

a 3-year program developed by Community Councils, which may include school repair works, including WASH. Similarly, NGOs like Save the Children have activated student councils and the school management to find solutions for routine maintenance of schools' WASH facilities.

- The MoES's Education Management Information System (EMIS), which collects routine data on schools, does not collect data on the functionality and cleanliness of school WASH facilities. Neither is there a local or provincial level government system for monitoring the maintenance of WASH facilities in schools during school inspections. NGOs also do not invest in monitoring the maintenance of WASH facilities.

3.2 Policies and Plans for WASH in Schools

The *Manual on School Structure and Protection* defines national sanitary hygiene norms for school buildings endorsed under the 2003 Decree of the Ministry of Health (MOH) (Ministry of Health, 2003). The norms define the minimum standards for the construction and maintenance of toilets and handwashing facilities and for waste disposal (see Box 1).

The norms include some recommendations for O&M of WASH facilities, such as separate funds for cleaning toilets; however, they do not provide comprehensive guidance for O&M planning and are reported to be weakly applied across schools (Save the Children, UNICEF, 2014). In May 2013, a working group was appointed by MOH ministerial decree to revise the norms, which were expected in 2015. Some of the additions include access to and cleaning of toilet facilities (through cleaning staff), presence of handwashing facilities and waste treatment methods. The MoUD also has standards for all buildings, including educational institutions (MoUD, 2014).

The *Armenia State Education Development Program Plan 2011-2015* highlights the need for better logistics, renovation and strengthening activities for school infrastructure, including for the water supply, sewerage and heating in 956 (66%) schools. For budgeting purposes, the plan also classifies education projects into six categories, two of which are reconstruction and development programs (mostly World Bank) (RoA, 2008). However, the plan also notes that there is a need for effective use of funding and management mechanisms at all government levels for greater

accountability. Other cross-cutting priorities in the plan that would impact WASH are increasing student and community involvement and improving the EMIS.

The *State Order on the calculation of financing of the public secondary educational institutions* includes a maintenance amount for utilities and services (Republic of Armenia,

2006 & 2014). Although there is a management line item in school budgets, guidance regarding how much to budget for various WASH costs (e.g. labor, soap, disinfectants, other cleaning materials, spare parts, water and electricity) is missing.

Box 1: Excerpts of School WASH Standards from the MoH Manual for School Structure and Protection, 2013

Toilet Facilities

- Separate toilets for girls and boys on every floor of the school – min 0.10 sq. meter.
- One lavatory and one wash stand for 30 students. One cabin (3 sq. meter) for personal hygiene for girls (one for 70 girls).
- Toilets for teachers.
- Cleaning of toilets with cleaning agents and disinfectants, 1-2 times per day. Funds for cleaning toilets to be kept separate.

Water and Handwashing

- Drinking water fountains in working order.
- Handwashing with soap before meals.

Waste Disposal

- The school rooms' play areas are to be cleaned every day.

3.3 Financial Allocations for O&M of WASH facilities in Schools

In Armenia, provincial municipalities are responsible for primary and secondary schools, which they manage using national government funding allocations. Every year, in September and January, schools submit data on the number of enrolled students to the provincial governor's office, which calculates the total annual school budget. This is submitted to the national MoES and Ministry of Finance, which approves and allocates funding to the provinces on a six-monthly basis. Once received, the provincial municipalities distributes the funds to schools. The provincial Department of Education and Science disburses funds to day-schools and to schools for children with special needs, while the provincial Department of Labour and Social Affairs disburses funds to boarding schools and orphanages.

Budget planning in schools is usually done by the school principal and school accountant and approved by the SMC, which is comprised of school teachers, parents,

representatives of local and province level government and the Department of Education and Science. School principals report to the SMC and submit their expense reports to the SMC on a quarterly basis. These are signed off and submitted to the governor's office every quarter. There are no budget lines for WASH, and any expense for WASH facilities in the school would come out of the general maintenance allocation.

According to the Republic of Armenia e-government website interactive budget data, the 2012 budget for general secondary education was 49 billion AMD (American University of Armenia, 2012). The financing of all public secondary educational institutions in the Republic of Armenia is implemented according to school size (number of students) based on the following formula:

$C_q = U_p \times U_q + \mathcal{N}_q$ where: C_q is the total amount allocated per year to the school, U_p is the number of students in the school, U_q is the sum of the annual amount per student and \mathcal{N}_q is the minimum amount for maintenance costs of the institution (Republic of Armenia, 2006 & 2014). $U_p \times U_q$ is

used for teaching and non-teaching staff wages, while the maintenance amount is used for utilities and supplies.

Using a base rate of the per-student amount of 121,097 AMD (295 US\$), secondary schools with up to 100 students were allocated an annual school budget of 16.876 million AMD (41,177 US\$) in 2014. Base rates are multiplied by coefficients, depending on location (mountains etc.), number of children with special needs and level of education (elementary, middle or higher school). The minimum maintenance amount for secondary schools was 3,239,100 AMD (7,903 US\$) in 2014. Based on key informant information that the per-student rate with coefficients for secondary schools was 134,391 AMD, it is expected that a median case-study school of 184 students would have received at least 28 million AMD (68,240 US\$) in 2014.

Allocating funds to schools on a per-student basis has challenges since smaller schools in low population density areas are at a disadvantage in covering teacher and administrative costs, forcing principals to minimize spending on maintenance costs, such as electricity and heating (American University of Armenia, 2012). Government informants noted that sometimes as little as 1% of the total school allocation (roughly 279,670 AMD (682 US\$) per median school per year) is dedicated to maintenance, which includes utilities (including electricity, heating and water) and supplies.

Other than annual budgets for schools, provincial governor's offices also directly implement urgent school construction projects using their budgets from national government. These construction projects are completed directly through the governor's office without involving schools. Community councils collect revenue in the form of local taxes; however, this usually does not support schools. It may support ECD centers or general waste management for the entire community, which has links to schools.

4. Situation in Schools

4.1 School Resources and Systems for O&M of WASH facilities

All case-study schools reported that they had responsibilities for the operation, maintenance and repair of

WASH facilities, and that their facilities were successfully operated and maintained. Responsibilities included paying water and electricity bills, regular cleaning of toilets and school premises, checking for breakdowns, making minor repairs in the water and sewerage system (e.g. repair of toilet pans, taps, leaks) and ensuring that there is heating in bathrooms and soap and toilet paper in toilets. Resource persons that schools use regularly for this purpose include the cleaner and technician, under the supervision of the principal. Although the general maintenance budget is intended to be used for WASH purchases, the median percentage of the budget used for WASH reported by nine schools was only 0.2%. Community Offices supported most schools with waste collection, while Provincial Offices occasionally supported major repairs. With NGO support, school children were mobilized and educated on health and hygiene and SMCs were activated to support WASH and health issues. SMC contributions are generally small and irregular, and were not documented.



Mariam (right), 5 and Hovhannes Vardanyan (left), 6 making paper figures at a daycare center in Armenia. Photo Credit: Save the Children

- All ten schools reported having school improvement plans, and in seven of the schools, the plans included water, sanitation and hygiene.

- All schools reported having a school budget which included a general maintenance budget line without a sub-line item for WASH facility maintenance. The general maintenance budgets are tight – one school representative said that the “budget is so restricted, that sometimes [I make] purchases from my pocket.” Nine schools reported using a very small percentage of general maintenance for WASH that ranged from 0.03% to 5%. The median value of 0.2% amounts to 6,478 AMD or 15 US\$ using the minimum maintenance amount. All schools reported that the principal and accountant prepared the school budget, either semiannually or annually, and after it is approved by the SMC, a request is sent to the provincial governor’s office, which disburses funds on a monthly basis. Three schools mentioned reporting on their WASH spending either in their quarterly or annual report.
- All 10 schools reported having a SMC. In five schools this body played a role in supporting WASH in schools. In these schools, the SMC was involved in one or more of the following: monitoring the cleanliness of schools, discussing issues and proposing solutions and fundraising to address issues. SMCs from seven schools had been trained. Four schools had received a one-off training from Save the Children, while three were trained by the National Institute of Education annually on all topics.
- All nine secondary schools reported having a student council. In seven of these schools the student council played a role in supporting WASH in schools. Student councils were involved in activities such as monitoring and ensuring cleanliness of school spaces, organizing cleaning days, holding meetings to discuss WASH related issues and proposing solutions to school and community authorities.
- Eight of the 10 schools reported having routine activities for the O&M of the commonly used piped water supply into the school building. This included checking for leaks and clogs in water pipes, cleanliness and functionality of taps, and fixing problems to ensure regular water supply in schools. All schools also reported purchasing soap, buckets and detergents for their commonly used handwashing facility. Seven of the eight schools reported that these problems were fixed either by a school technician under the supervision of the principal. Nearly all (nine of ten) schools confirmed that the routine O&M responsibilities of provincial authorities and/or the AWSC were limited to community water pipes before it entered the school. However, seven schools reported that water quality testing of the most commonly used water source was done in the past year by external agencies – either by a specialist from the Community Office or by the local hygiene and disease control service. Also, two schools in Armavir reported that the AWSC or a local water company helped with repairs that the school could not manage itself. Problems with water systems included inconsistent water supply in winter months due to frozen or broken pipes and poor water pressure in peripheral regions. Therefore, school representatives suggested adding a heating system and hot water.
- All schools reported having flushing toilets that were cleaned and disinfected daily by a school cleaner paid by the government. Eight schools also reported purchasing cleaning materials for the commonly used toilet. Nine schools reported they had responsibilities for repair of toilets (changing broken parts, removing clogs, fixing pipes), while two schools from Armavir reported local government authorities may help finance major repairs. Schools recommended ensuring that there were facilities for safe menstrual hygiene management, renovating to fix facility damages and increasing the number of toilets.
- Eight of the ten schools reported that the community waste service was responsible for waste collection, which usually took place on a weekly basis. Two schools reported burying their waste.
- All schools reported that one or more person, such as the principle, school accountant, office manager or technician, was responsible for the purchase of school supplies, including WASH materials. The median distance to the nearest shop was 11.5 km, and the reported monthly travel time for purchase of supplies was mostly 1-3 hrs. Shops adjacent to nine schools were visited during the study and cost data was collected on water treatment (chlorine), handwashing (bar and liquid soap), cleaning (broom, waste bucket,

cleaning powder, scoop and sponge), and repair (elbow pipe, downpipe, cement, tap, door latch, door hinge and bondex) supplies.

- Hygiene education takes place in all schools as part of home-room lessons in smaller grades or healthy lifestyle lessons higher grades every semester. Hygiene education and promotion takes place using books and posters donated by organizations such as NGOs.

4.2 School WASH Costs

School plans, budgets and expense records could not be inspected during the study to make numerical comparisons between allocations, budgets and expenses. However, fund allocations to schools, WASH related budgets and actual costs quoted by school authorities were used in the study to determine median costs per student per year and median costs per school per year for those that reported their expenses.

The cost of a cleaner is the highest, with a median of 829,412 AMD (2,024 US\$) per school per year. This expense is covered through a salary line item. The median costs for handwashing and toilet cleaning materials, as well as for routine water O&M, waste disposal and hygiene education were within the rough 1% of the total school allocation used for maintenance as mentioned by ministerial officials. However, with other expenses such as utility bills and services, it is expected that maintenance allocation would have been insufficient to pay WASH O&M costs. Schools report that only a median 0.2% of their maintenance budget (15 US\$) is used for WASH. Thus, payment for additional expenses would have come through SMC and NGO support. Schools did not report budgets or expenditures for hygiene education materials, teacher/SMC training or health club activities, but these costs were covered by the NGO supporting these activities.

Table I. Median costs of WASH in School Items Reported by School Authorities

WASH in School Item	No of Schools (median school size, s)	Cost AMD (US\$)/student/year	Cost AMD (US\$)/median school/year
Water routine O&M (e.g. fixing leaks, clogs, taps)	8 (s= 153)	215.20 (0.53)	32,927 (80)
Handwashing station materials (e.g. soap, bucket, detergents, toilet paper, chlorine)	9 (s= 180)	333.33 (0.81)	60,000 (144)
Toilet cleaning materials (e.g. chlorine, detergent, toilet paper, soap)	8 (s=153)	540.01 (1.32)	82,623 (202)
Cleaner*	10 (s=184)	4607.8 (11.24)	829,412 (2,024)
Waste Disposal	1 (s=69)	289.85 (0.70)	20,000 (49)
Hygiene education	1 (s=200)	100 (0.24)	20,000 (49)

*Paid through salary line item

4.3 Condition of WASH Facilities

WASH facilities in schools were mostly functional and clean on the day of the visit. This may be because of NGO support for refurbishments and SMC and student council action. In a typical government school without NGO support, toilets are often broken, unclean and partially functional.

All 10 schools had running water at their water points on the day of the visit. Across the 10 schools, 32 of 42

handwashing stations (median four handwashing stations per school) were observed and all were functional. Nineteen of these had soap, and soap was absent from all stations in three schools. There were 33 toilets across the 10 schools (median three toilets per school), all of which were functional (one was partially functional) on the day of the visit. But aside for one instance, handwashing stations or toilets did not have a posted schedule for cleaning of facilities. There were no signs of open defecation or litter on any of the school grounds.



Refurbished toilet facility in a NGO supported school (left), and a toilet in a government school without NGO support (right).

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Armenia has the institutional and policy framework and financing mechanism to promote WASH in schools. The MoES, along with provincial offices and ministerial departments, oversee the construction, rehabilitation and provision of water and sanitation services, along with contribution from other agencies. The *Manual: School Structure and Protection*, the *State Education Development Program Plan* and the *Order on the calculation of financing of the public secondary educational institutions* require schools to prioritize WASH with a maintenance budget for the management of their WASH facilities. Financial allocations to schools for teaching and non-teaching staff allocations are calculated based on school size, as well as on a minimum maintenance amount for schools to cover utilities and services. Case-study schools, which were NGO supported, reported having a general maintenance budget, an SMC as well as student councils and a government paid cleaner for daily cleaning of school premises.

Despite these good practices, both at national and sub-national level, as well as in purposefully selected schools with NGO support, there are areas for improvement. Despite having a school maintenance budget, due to the absence of a dedicated budget line for WASH and a lack of guidance on amounts to be budgeted for O&M of WASH facilities, WASH is given low priority. Government officials noted that given other priorities, as little as 1% of total

school allocations were used for maintenance; and in speaking with school officials, a median 0.2% of the maintenance budget was quoted as being used for WASH. Government monitoring systems also do not assess WASH facilities, and therefore do not provide an incentive for schools to maintain facilities. School supported by NGOs have renovated facilities, which are generally well-maintained. However, with the gaps in maintenance, the improved conditions are not expected to last very long after NGO support ends.

Recommendations made by key informants to improve the O&M of WASH facilities in Armenian schools were as follows:

- Improve the national sanitary hygiene norms for school buildings with better guidance on WASH O&M planning and budgeting.
- Add an amount for WASH to the formula for estimating school annual budgets so that schools are in a better position to allocate funds for WASH.
- A separate sub-line item for WASH under general maintenance would help schools in planning and prioritizing WASH.
- A functional monitoring system that relies on community action from students and teachers using facilities in schools, the SMC and local government will help ensure facilities are clean, functional and well-maintained.

- Consistent cooperation between the government and national/ international NGOs for WASH in Schools and capacity building in O&M.
- Emphasis on hygiene education in schools and awareness campaigns in communities.

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