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washplus News

Supportive Environments for Healthy Communities

Program Highlights



The WASHplus-implemented SPLASH project commemorated the second global Menstrual Hygiene Day at Nsanjika Primary School in Chipata District. More than 600 people attended, including the assistant to the permanent secretary of Eastern Province, District Education Board Secretaries (DEBS), USAID, and five neighboring schools and communities. The event was characterized by talks, poems, exhibition stands, songs, and speeches geared toward enlightening the audience about menstrual hygiene management (MHM). A highlight of the event was a passionate poem performance on stopping the hesitation to talk about menstruation by a group of adolescent boys and girls from the Magweru School for the Blind. See the [video](#).

Bangladesh—Managing Infant Feces Can Help Improve Growth

Most sanitation interventions target adults and school-aged

July 2015

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children, ignoring the role that infant feces plays as a disease vector. WASHplus works with district government counterparts and other development partners like the USAID SHIKHA and SPRING projects in southwest Bangladesh to closely examine current feces disposal practices by age cohort—lap child (newborn to 6 month), 6 to 12 month olds, 1 to 2 year olds, and 2 to 5 year olds—considering toilet training as well as caretaker methods. WASHplus is developing a menu of small doable actions—feasible yet effective feces management practices—by age cohort to promote to caretakers as alternatives to current practice. Enabling technologies like potties and repurposed farming trowels as well as motivational and normative messaging are essential integration components. These small doable actions will be integrated into ongoing nutrition activities and promoted in household outreach and courtyard sessions.

Training of trainers is scheduled to begin in early August, starting with trainers from the SHIKHA implementing partner BRAC. Thirty trainers will be trained in WASH and nutrition with a focus on safe feces disposal. This focus will be integrated into the project's comprehensive infant and young child feeding activities.

Benin—Children Take the Initiative for Safe Drinking Water



WASHplus's Benin peri-urban program has branched out into schools where the lack of latrines, drinking water, and handwashing stations is acutely felt. WASHplus implementing partner ABMS/PSI engaged its

school activities coordinator to conduct intensive sessions at all 10 schools in the pilot neighborhoods of Enagnon and Agbato. The response has been enthusiastic as students, teachers, and parents come together to develop criteria to make their schools WASH-Friendly. All the schools in the pilot are competing to achieve WASH-Friendly status. Handwashing with soap and nicely maintained school yards are becoming the norm. However, the need for classroom drinking water containers has stirred up controversy. Schools have no money, and teachers in the public schools are not allowed to ask parents for financial contributions. Teachers, nonetheless, have been giving lessons on the importance of safe storage and treatment of drinking water. In what could be a model way to overcome this impasse,

Urban Health

WASH and Nutrition

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NEW PUBLICATIONS

WASH and Nutrition Learning Brief

This first in a series of [learning briefs](#) WASHplus is producing in its final year documents the project's WASH and nutrition integration programming efforts to stimulate the discussion and improve the evidence base as well as share experiences and approaches to integrating the two sectors at the global and country level.

Zambia Stories from the Field

The WASHplus-implemented SPLASH project is documenting its impact on schools in the Eastern Province. Read three stories from the field on the [Community Approach to MHM, Shifting Social Norms, and Improvements in Water Access and Quality](#).

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Each issue highlights new publications and

one enterprising 10-year-old, Claudine, proclaimed that students at her school should contribute to the purchase of classroom drinking water containers. The students organized a committee to raise funds and eventually raised 1,025 CFA Francs, from snack money and parent contributions. A bit more is needed, but the energy and commitment are there. This experience reinforced the notion that children can be powerful motivators of parents when they themselves are convinced of the right action. An extended version of this story is available [here](#) in French.

WASHplus's peri-urban program was featured at the exhibition of USAID investments celebrating the opening of the new U.S. Embassy building in Cotonou, July 8. Read more about the peri-urban pilot program in [English](#) or [French](#).

Mali—Hands-On Training at the Pump



WASHplus is completing the rehabilitation of 33 water points in the Bankass and Mopti districts, both large diameter wells and boreholes with hand pumps, and part of this effort includes building the capacity of local water pump technicians to perform and maintain repairs. In June, the project held its first training, which consisted of both theoretical training in a classroom setting and hands-on pump repair experience under the supervision of six experienced technicians in

the village of Diaby. The new water pump technicians were pleased with the training because they've seen many pumps like the one they worked on but had not known how to fix them. In addition, the community of Ségué was happy to have a working pump for the first time in two years. The village chief and his counselor indicated that they planned to reactivate the village water pump committee to maintain the pump. WASHplus plans to provide materials and equipment for future repairs and to put in place a system for resupply.

Nepal—Cookstove Trial Commences

In March, as part of WASHplus Consumer Needs,

resources on many different WASH and HAP topics. Recent weeklies focused on the topics of Waste Pickers, WASH and Nutrition, and Management of Infant/Child Feces. To subscribe, sign up at washplus.org, or [email](#). Past issues can be viewed [here](#).

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Preferences and Willingness to Pay for Improved Cookstoves research in Nepal, WASHplus undertook a Controlled Cooking Test (CCT) study, which involves preparing a standardized regional meal to determine the relative fuel efficiency and time demands of different stoves. A total of 168 CCTs were completed by eight cooks recruited from villages outside of Kathmandu. WASHplus trained all CCT cooks on how to use all of the study cookstoves, and the cooks practiced on each of the stoves for 10 days in their own homes prior to the study. The baseline technology was a three-stone fire, and the five new stoves were the Prakti Double Burner Wood Stove with Chimney, Eco-Chula XXL, AEPC-promoted local chimney stove, Xunda Field Dragon, and the Greenway Jumbo. All five stoves had significantly lower specific fuel consumption than the traditional chulho, with savings ranging from 29 percent to 47 percent. Time savings were also significant, with mean cooking times ranging from 15 percent to 33 percent less time than the traditional chulho, which required 64 minutes on average. In-home trials of the five stove types began in June and will continue until October.

Zambia—WASH-Friendly Assessments



Three years into the implementation of the SPLASH project in the Mambwe District of Zambia, a team from SPLASH and Ministry of Education partners conducted WASH (water, sanitation, and hygiene)-Friendly

assessments of 43 intervention schools in the district. The team looked at four key components—the presence of WASH facilities and whether they were clean and functional; evidence of improved hygiene behaviors: handwashing with soap/ash at critical times, proper use of a toilet, and safe storage of drinking water; hygiene education, menstrual hygiene, and integration of WASH in classroom teaching; and the ability of the school community to repair and replace any damaged components, to pay for maintenance labor, and purchase items such as tissue and sanitary pads. This was closely linked with assessment of how actively involved the community is in WASH and levels of user contributions toward WASH. The assessors observed what percentage of pupils came from the latrines with washed hands; minutes of PTA and WASH Education Committee meetings for evidence that WASH was actively discussed/planned; and teacher files for evidence of integration of WASH in classroom teaching.

A total of 21 schools were granted WASH-Friendly status, with many more taking steps toward that designation. A number of schools have come very far indeed. Kamuwawa Primary has overcome a dry borehole situation to provide a regular source of clean water for the school with community support. Others schools that had no sanitary facilities at the beginning of the project now feature adequate latrines with handwashing stations. And all the schools assessed are implementing MHM at the school level and have established WASH Committees with operations and maintenance systems in place.

GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS AND FORA

Voices of Why Menstruation Matters



As part of a DC Coalition, WASHplus celebrated Menstrual Hygiene Day on May 28 with a learning

event that showcased voices on why menstrual hygiene matters to WASH, education, reproductive health, environmental health, human rights, and gender equality; 110 people attended. WASHplus played a significant role in planning and facilitating the event, which featured dynamic speakers such as Diana Sierra, founder of BeGirl; voices of girls from around the world; and exhibitions of menstrual management solutions. The Menstrual Hygiene Day celebration received wide press and social media coverage, including stories on [MTV News](#) and [National Public Radio](#) (NPR), which was amplified by social media via Twitter and Facebook. Additionally and related, WASHplus partnered on a #MenstrualHygiene Twitter chat on May 21 that also garnered wide participation from the twitterverse. Hosted by WASH United, WASH Advocates, and The Kachra Project the twitter chat focused on the themes of “putting men in menstruation,” menstrual hygiene policy advocacy around the world, and menstrual waste and disposal. Both the Menstrual Hygiene Day [celebration](#) and the May 21 #MenstrualHygiene [Twitterchat](#) were “storified” by FHI 360 on their Crowd 360 Conversations blog.

PPPHW Handwashing Think Tank

AfricaSan 4, held May 25–27, 2015, in Dakar, Senegal, served as the backdrop for the Global Public-Private Partnership for Handwashing’s (PPPHW) Regional Handwashing Think Tank. Presentations and discussions revolved around three big ideas: emotional motivators,

behavioral settings, and the science of habit. The main themes put forth were new ways to trigger behavior change; the importance of engaging young people in delivering change; key barriers that need to be addressed (with a focus on hardware issues); the need for integration of handwashing programs with other sectors; and the need for better approaches to engage governments. PPPHW concluded its participation in AfricaSan with a session on Moving Hygiene to Scale. A summary of events, blog posts from the conference, and other resources are available [here](#).

Behavior Change and Clean Cooking Presentations

USAID's TRAction project held a panel discussion in April at the National Press Club in Washington, DC, to discuss behavior change strategies for clean cooking. The event highlighted lessons from a recently published [special issue](#) of the Journal of Health Communication that WASHplus contributed to, *Advancing Communication and Behavior Change Strategies for Cleaner Cooking*. View Julia Rosenbaum's presentation [here](#). Ms. Rosenbaum also presented on WASHplus cookstove research at the two-day workshop "Beyond Distribution: Ensuring and Evaluating the Adoption of Clean Cooking and Its Benefits" held in Peru in May. View that presentation [here](#).

RESOURCE PARTNER HIGHLIGHTS

Water and Sanitation for the Urban Poor (WSUP) and Business Fights Poverty co-hosted an online discussion on the vital role that business has to play in increasing access to safe and clean water in June. The discussion looked specifically at the theme of multi-stakeholder partnerships—what are the most promising partnership models designed to tackle shared water risks? Read [more](#).

The United Nations Foundation Announced that

Ashish J. Thakkar, founder of Mara Group and Mara Foundation, will serve as Chair of the UN Foundation's Global Entrepreneurs Council (GEC). As the first African entrepreneur to lead the GEC, Thakkar will bring a unique, global perspective to the council's mission to work with entrepreneurs. Read [more](#).



WASHplus is a multi-year project funded through USAID's Bureau for Global Health that supports healthy households and communities by developing and implementing interventions that lead to improvements in water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and household air pollution (HAP) activities. WASHplus is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) under cooperative agreement AID-0AA-A10-00040. The information in this newsletter does not necessarily represent the views or positions of USAID or the U.S. government.