



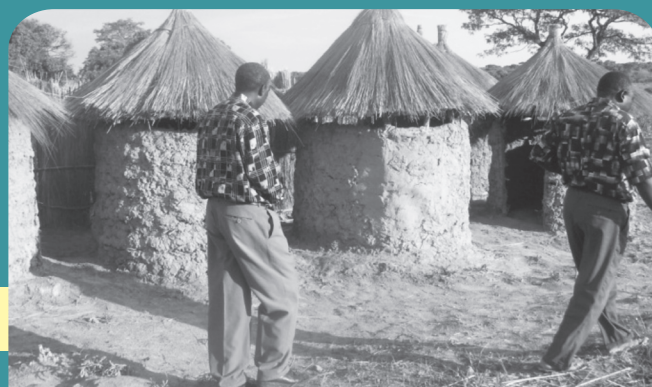
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School sanitation and hygiene education in Kaoma District, Zambia.

All photos courtesy of Village Water



School sanitation & hygiene education in Kaoma District, Zambia

This field note presents a School Sanitation and Hygiene Education experience in Kaoma District of Western Province of Zambia

Most rural schools in the district do not meet the basic sanitation needs of children for a healthy learning environment. Open defecation remains the predominant norm and poses one of the biggest threats to the health of children at school. Poor school sanitation conditions contribute to poor performance of children at school and deny the children to their rights of equal access to quality education for all. Thus school sanitation facilities and access to hygiene education information are necessary for a safe, secure, and conducive environment for productive child learning, and attaining their desired level of academic potential.

In addition, young children educated in the benefits of sanitation and good hygiene behaviour have proved to be ambassadors for carrying those messages far beyond the school boundaries, bringing lasting improvement not only to their lives, but also to those of their families and the wider community.

The current situation

The official statistics indicate that the District has 4 high schools, 85 basic schools and 46 community schools. The total number of water points in schools is 104. Out of the 104 water points, there are 64 boreholes, 39 shallow protected wells with windlass and only one piped water point. The total number of pupils in schools in the district is 30,524 of which 17,463 are girls and 13,061 are boys. On average most basic schools and community schools have 2 functioning latrines thus falling far below the recommended 20 pupils per latrine target. In certain cases 1,800 children at a school share 8 latrines giving an average of

90 children per hole while in other schools children only know grass structures. This scenario does not exclude teacher sanitation requirements and has become a normal way of living for both children and their teachers.

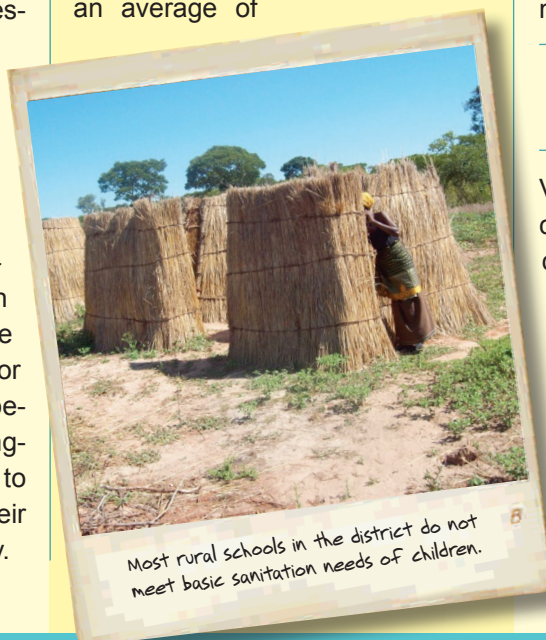
Lack of sanitation facilities and poor hygiene affect both girls and boys, although inadequate sanitary conditions at school have a stronger negative impact on girls. More than half of the school-girls who drop out of school in upper primary classes do so because they miss school periodically during their menstrual periods; when the lack of separate toilet facilities and no easy access to water sources within the school create discomfort and embarrassment.

Working to improve the situation

Village Water Zambia (VWZ) in collaboration with the District Education Board Secretary's Office initiated a project which was financed by Simavi, an NGO from the Netherlands. This project had a special focus on schools and affirmed the fact that children have the right to basic social facilities such as clean drinking water, safe sanitation and a



Mr. Elisha Ng'onomo



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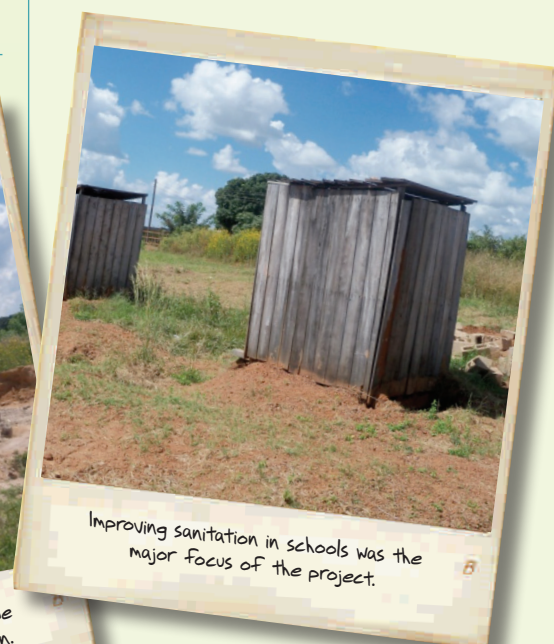
clean learning environment among others. The NGO and Education Office identified school sanitation as a key area of collaboration, recognizing the fact that improved hygiene practices and clean school environment contributes to ensuring children enjoy acceptable standards of health at school, and creates a conducive learning environment in a school for the cognitive, creative and social development of children in relation to their future hygiene and sanitation values and behaviours. In society children often have the eagerness and zeal to learn and adopt new ideas. New hygiene behaviour learned at school can lead to life-long positive habits.

This project supported 9 schools by constructing integrated latrines comprising pit latrines, urinal, built-in hand washing facility and a girl's shower.

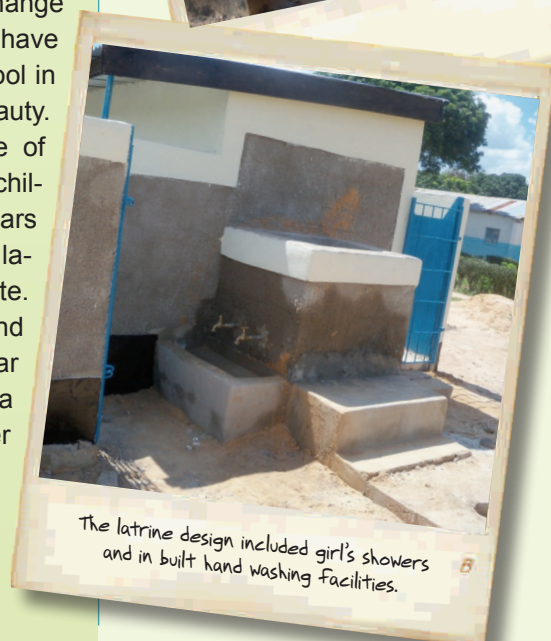
The project development objective was to improve the health and wellbeing of the pupils by increasing their access to sustainable and equitable water supply, sanitation and hygiene education. The specific objectives for the school WaSH component of the project were:

1. To improve access to safe and clean water of schools in the six wards by 2009.
2. To promote safe hygiene and sanitation among all the benefiting schools, targeting among other issues sustainable use and care of water, water sources, water utensils, latrines, and solid waste management.
3. To enhance collaboration among the sector players so as to effectively and efficiently plan, implement, monitor and evaluate integrated water, sanitation and hygiene interventions in schools.

Activities



"The integrated latrines are new in this district and they have more facilities which are normally overlooked by other designs. The new integrated latrines have made schools become friendlier to children, especially girls. They are spacious and easy to clean. The integration of urinal, hand washing facility, the pits and girls shower makes these latrines unique and they encourage behaviour change in the children. The latrines have also added value to our school in terms of sanitation and beauty. Our school is in the middle of town and has about 2000 children and over the past few years the school only had one pit latrine for girls also in a bad state. The boys had no latrine and depended on the bush near the school and this was not a healthy situation- Headmaster Mulamatila Basic School".



The Results

1. The project created a culture in which both boys and girls in schools share the duties of cleaning latrines, sweeping classrooms and compounds and providing water to the latrines.
2. Girls said they were managing menstruation more easily and are now committed to remaining in school because of the new latrines which meet their basic needs.
3. Teachers have acquired sufficient knowledge to bring about changes in behaviour in schools and have become agents of change.

Innovation

The two designs of hand washing facilities: At the top, hand washing facility for the boy's latrines. The waste water from hand washing passes through the urinal to the soak away. The idea is that the waste water helps to flush the urine into the soak away. This reduces the smell as urine is always pushed out of the latrine whenever children wash their hands. These latrines in rural areas without access to piped water and power.

Lessons Learnt

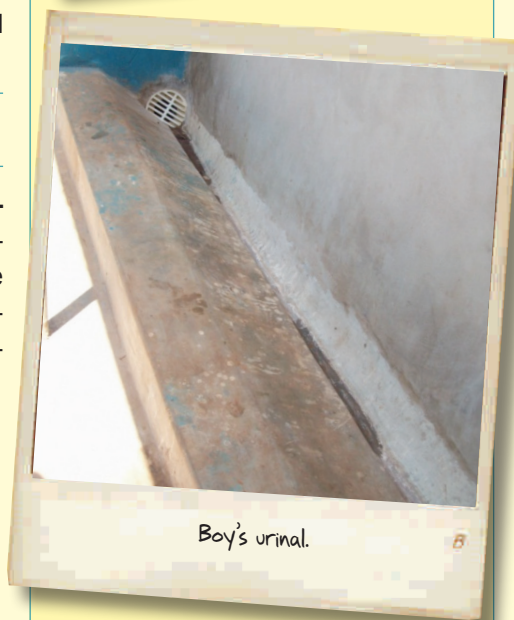
Involvement of school management committees: Successful dissemination of health and hygiene information and facilitation of activities at the school level depended largely on the participation of school administration and the involvement of SHN focal teachers. In schools where the administrations were active, teachers and pupils were ready to receive the support they needed to conduct health sessions and orga-



Hand washing facilities for the boy's latrines.



Girl's urinal.



Boy's urinal.

nize awareness-raising activities. **Innovations:** Successful behaviour change in school children can be enhanced by innovative ideas integrated in designing latrines. Because of the extra facilities such as urinal and well-designed hand washing facility, children are all the time attracted to use them.

Conclusion

In conclusion, provision of adequate clean water and sanitation facilities coupled with proper hygiene education in schools are essential for fostering a conducive and effective learning environment, attracting enrolment and retaining children in schools, particularly girls, and reducing the potential of disease outbreaks and worm infestation among school children. If these conditions are created, children are attracted to attend school, enjoy learning, learn in comfort and take concepts and practices on sanitation and hygiene back to their homes. In other words, children become the agents of change in the homes and communities. This environment makes investment in education more attractive to children, their parents, the teachers and government.

To the left are pictures of boys and girls urinal's. Note the differences in the designs.

By Elisha Ng'onomo

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Village Water provides hygiene education and sustainable water for rural villages in western Zambia. We only install protected shallow wells with manual water pumps that allow the people to draw uncontaminated water from underground.

Diarrhoea is one of the leading causes of infant mortality in Zambia and a major contributor to malnutrition. The safe disposal of human excreta, coupled with basic hygiene practices such as hand washing with soap are key to breaking the cycle of disease transmission for diarrhoea, particularly amongst children under five.

Our teams of field workers have the job of mobilising the people

- Each community must set up a village water committee.
- The treasurer collects small monthly donations from each working adult. This allows them to fund spare parts and keep the pump in good repair.
- Two villagers, one man, one woman, are trained as pump minders.
- Embark on a sanitation programme where they dig their own pit latrines, one per family.
- Use the cement and other materials, that we donate for digging latrines, but they must provide the labour.
- Install a hand washing facility at the exit of each latrine.
- Engage in hygiene education classes concerning kitchen and food cleanliness, dog control and children's needs.

Learn more about how we mobilise the villagers.

Village Water programmes have an immense and long-lasting impact

- Children can wash regularly and good hygiene practice is maintained; avoiding the life-threatening diseases caused by insufficient water and poor hygiene practice.
- Families no longer go hungry as the water grows plentiful supplies of nourishing food.
- A local source of water gives village women the time to create their own local enterprise and children the time to attend school.
- A sustainable and reliable source of water allows farmers to harvest crops throughout the year instead of the single crop reliant on the rainy season. Surplus food can be sold at local markets.
- Money made through their enterprise enables families to pay for medicines and an education for their now-healthy children.
- Village Water believes that no one should be deprived of water in our modern world.

Key to the work of Village Water is the groundwork carried out by local field workers. These are professional community workers who encourage the villagers to organise themselves by forming a Village Water & Sanitation Committee. The formation of the Committee proves if the village has the vitality to take ownership of the well and pump seriously, the capacity to pay a small commitment fee for the well of around £20 (pounds sterling) and the ability to fund the running costs. Such ownership is essential to ensure sustainability.

Read what the village headman of Nalituya said about the work of Village Water.

Pump Installation

In such isolated regions, connection to mains water pipes is not viable. An independent source of water must therefore be located in order for a well to be installed. Village Water uses local knowledge as well as the skills of UK volunteer water diviners to locate the water, following which local contractors are brought in to dig the shallow well.

Another important aspect of the work of Village Water is the Community-Led Total Sanitation Programme (CLTS). Villagers are educated in good hygiene practice and shown the benefits of self-help sanitation. Hygiene education focuses on helping the villagers to understand: firstly, what causes health-related problems and secondly, choosing what measures to take, in order to address the problem. Training focuses on water treatment, water collection, water storage and water use. Then we cover latrine building, latrine use, hand washing, food storage and preservation, excreta disposal and general cleanliness. Using stories, song, dance, pictures, music and humour the community workers sensitise the villagers to a new way of thinking and understanding.

To accompany the hygiene education, Village Water hygiene and sanitation programmes support the provision and maintenance of sanitary facilities in schools and villages. For each village, the villagers are taught how to construct various pieces of sanitation equipment. They are then advised and

expected to construct one pit latrine per household. This is typically 25 per village. We also advise that each household should construct one bath shelter, one pot rack, one mortar stand, and one hand washing basin (all of which they have been taught how to build).

Pump Mender Training

To ensure sustainability of the pump after installation, Village Water trains two villagers to safely and effectively carry out all basic maintenance on the well. To complement this, semi-professional Pump Minders, who are able to fix more technical problems, look after the villages where wells have been provided. The monthly subscription fee, set up by the villagers when the well is installed, pays for any repairs. Typically, the subscription is 10 pence per working adult per month (in local currency, the Zambian kwacha).

Rehabilitation Programmes

Across Zambia there are a substantial number of abandoned water pumps where no sustainability strategy was put in place by the organisation that installed it. Abandonment occurs when a village has not requested the well, is not given ownership of the well and the villagers are not trained to maintain the well. Having established a system that ensures wells remain in use in perpetuity, Village Water includes in its programmes the refurbishment of abandoned wells. Carrying out the repair in conjunction with a full Village Water community mobilisation, and hygiene and sanitation programme avoids the pitfalls that caused the well to be previously abandoned after it was installed.

Monitoring and Evaluation

We try to make annual visits to each village. A locally employed Village Water Field Officer checks that the well is still working and that sufficient sanitation equipment has been installed. Under a monitoring and evaluation scheme now being trialled, the village is then given a percentage score. A perfect village will display a maintained pump, one toilet and hand washing stand per family, one vegetable and plate rack per family, a suitable number of refuse pits and all rubbish put in a pit and buried. If the village is performing well they will receive a highly prized hand-stitched leather football, purchased by Village Water from the local Zambian charity 'Alive and Kicking'. If the village is performing badly, local field workers will speak with the community and work with them to encourage a renewed effort. The information is currently collated on a spreadsheet. We are in the process of developing a database to maintain these statistics.

Our Achievements

To date, we have succeeded in serving over 60,000 people in 240 villages, each with either a new or rehabilitated well and with around 20 pit latrines for toilets, with hand washing, refuse pits and plate and vegetable racks to keep the food off the ground - and this is having a dramatic impact upon the health of the people, particularly children. All the sanitation work is undertaken by the people themselves with Village Water providing cement and other materials.

Source: <http://www.villagewater.org/what-we-do>

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