



WASH in Schools Programme in Chad: Development of a National Strategy using an Inclusive Sector Process

SUMMARY

This note describes an inclusive process of analysis of the bottlenecks to water, sanitation and hygiene in primary schools in Chad. This activity led by the Ministry of Education with the support of UNICEF triggered the WASH sector into forming a National Alliance for Healthy Schools.

The Alliance exploited the bottleneck analysis to inform the process of strategy development and to ensure an intersectoral approach to WASH access in schools while creating synergies amongst the different ministries and stakeholders. As a result, the stakeholders defined a common vision and developed a WASH in Schools (WinS) National Strategy to address the bottlenecks, elevating it to a more strategic level.

Since the validation of the national Strategy for WinS in 2019, 194 schools integrated Menstrual Hygiene Management, compared to 4 schools in 2018. A more holistic sanitation approach is promoted in schools and communities. As a result, in 2019, a first cohort of 184 schools were integrated in the sanitation and hygiene programme. For 2020-2021 school year, it is expected to scale up to 767 further schools reaching a total of 174,000 students.

Introduction

Chad is a land-locked country in sub-Saharan Africa with a population of 15.4 million people (Macro Poverty Outlook, 2018). 47% of the population is under 14 years of age or younger, with more than 2.86 million being primary school aged children (UNESCO, 2019). In recent years, the percentage of the total government budget allocated to the education department has increased substantially, reaching more than 17.7% in 2019 (National Budget, 2019).

Chad is one of the countries with the highest open defecation rates in the world, with 67 % of the national population defecating in the open (JMP, 2019). A bigger part of this percentage live in rural areas where 8 out of 10 people practice open defecation. The situation is more alarming in schools with about 8 out of 10 students with no access to water, sanitation and hygiene services (JMP 2018) and in some parts of the country, 85% of school children practice open defecation (Ministry of Education, 2019).

The National Policy and Strategy on Sanitation (PSNA, 2017), highlights the need for better access to WASH services in schools and related infrastructure requirements but did not consider the Ministry of Education (MoE) as a key stakeholder.

One of the key challenges is a lack of a robust monitoring system with very limited data on water, sanitation and hygiene services in schools. The main source of information on WASH in schools (WinS) is the annual statistical survey *Annuaire Statistique*, but it only includes quantitative data on the availability of water and sanitation infrastructure. It does not capture information on handwashing with soap or menstrual hygiene management (MHM). Despite efforts made by the MoE, it is not regularly administered.

There are very few local and international development organizations implementing WinS in the country, which means that capacity to implement it is low. According to the National Federation of Parents' Associations of Chad (FENAPET), 45% of the schools in the country are fully maintained by the Parents Associations (APE) and in 65% of the schools, parents also pay for teachers' salaries. APE's are an influential organization but do not have the financial capacity to fulfil all schools' needs.



Students' Assembly in Leproserie Primary School, N'Djamena, Chad.

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Description of interventions

In 2017, the WASH and Education Sectors worked closely to influence the government and other key stakeholders to develop a sustainable WinS programme in Chad, by addressing

identified bottlenecks to programme implementation. Several interventions were undertaken under the leadership of the Ministry of Education, with the support of UNICEF.

Improved data to trigger the process

Bolstered by data from several studies on WinS, UNICEF and other organizations started advocating for improved access to WASH. Findings from these studies had shown that 1 out of 3 water points in schools were not functional; and the ratio of functional latrines to pupils was 1:329, resulting in a very limited access to WASH services in schools.

But the MoE needed more information and a better understanding of the situation to develop best strategies and tools to set up a robust and sustainable WinS programme and so it was important to improve MoE skills and learn from similar programmes around the region and world

Training and exchange of experiences to improve knowledge

In 2017, the UNICEF's Regional Office for West and Central Africa, in coordination with Burkina Faso's Institut International d'Ingénierie de l'Eau et de l'Environnement (2iE), launched a WinS course following findings of the bottleneck analysis of WinS in the region. The first cohort of 35 participants from nine countries, attended the face-to-face WinS course in the French language, which was held in Ouagadougou. UNICEF Chad office and the MoE sponsored the participation of two Chadian government officials and UNICEF Chad staff team (Education and WASH).

The course provided the opportunity to exchange experiences and to learn best practices on WinS programming around the world and in the region. During the course, a case study on the situation of WinS in Chad was developed so it could be used as a tool to advocate to decision makers about the need to increase efforts to improve WASH access in Chadian schools.

Advocacy to mobilize and involve the government and key organizations

After the course in Burkina Faso, UNICEF and the MoE organized debriefing sessions for key

government agencies and stakeholders involved in strategic planning, financing and/or implementation of WinS. New data on the state of WinS in Chad and relevant experiences on WinS programming from other countries were used to advocate for improved WASH services in the country. From these briefings, a set of commitments were identified for action.

These series of advocacy events concluded with a consensus to develop a National Strategy for WinS and to create a National Coalition for Healthy Schools, referred later as the “Alliance”, that would become the forum for discussion and development of the Strategy.

Five working groups were formed from coalition members and key stakeholders to develop different components of the Strategy. The work of each group was compiled, and conclusions were presented and discussed with members of civil society, including representatives of vulnerable groups (i.e. women’s associations, nomad groups, associations of disabled people).

WASH in Schools Bottleneck Analysis to generate evidence

The WASH Bottleneck Analysis Tool (BAT) (www.washbat.org) was implemented with the support of a consulting firm, to provide more qualitative and quantitative data for refinement of the National Strategy for WinS.

With guidance from MoE staff, the consultants gathered data from direct observations and interviews with key informants from the school communities, including directors, teachers, members of the parents’ association, students and community members. Fifty schools in three different provinces were surveyed.



Boy and girls in a classroom in Kanem province.

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KEY SUCCESS FACTORS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR WinS:

Participative process, where all stakeholders as well as members of a National Coalition were actively involved in:

- defining a shared vision for the development of healthy schools;
- selecting of key elements as strategic paths to vertebrate the National Strategy;
- choosing their specific roles in the implementation of the Strategy from the start of the process.

This participatory approach, including a wide range of actors and all National Coalition for Healthy Schools members, helped to easily integrate the key findings of the WASH BAT into the National Strategy and the buy-in by the WASH and Education sectors.

Outcomes

A Focal Point for WASH in Schools Programme at the Ministry of Education

The institutional framework has been strengthened with the appointment of two WinS focal points from the Directorate of the Feeding, Nutrition and School Health programmes (DANSS) and the Directorate of Analysis and Prospective (DAPRO). The senior officials who had received training in Burkina Faso took responsibility for the coordination of the development of the WinS National Strategy. Building their capacity in WinS was instrumental to having a common understanding of the scope of the problem. It facilitated the government-led process. Their inputs were key for the inclusion of fundamental elements such as the behaviour change component, the phased approach for the

Figure 1: Steps followed by the Ministry of Education to develop a Wins Strategy in Chad



Source: UNICEF Chad, 2018

improvement of WASH conditions in schools and MHM. WASH was thus integrated in the MoE.

WinS elevated to a more strategic level and prioritized in the national agenda

The National Alliance for Healthy Schools was created in 2018 and was later responsible for developing the National WinS Strategy, the national norms and standards for WinS and for planning and coordinating more affordable and sustainable interventions. It became the national reference framework to ensure that partner interventions contribute to access to water, sanitation and hygiene in schools in a holistic manner.

This Alliance is composed of key government ministries that have been working together to bring WinS to a more strategic and political level of the national development agenda. Agencies include the MoE, referred to as *Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de la Promotion Civique* (MENPC), Ministry of Health- referred to as *Ministère de la Santé Publique* (MSP) and Ministry of Environment, Water and Fisheries referred to as *Ministère de l'Environnement, de l'Eau, et de la Pêche* (MEEP), Directorate of the Feeding, Nutrition and School Health programmes (DANSS) and the Directorate of Analysis and Prospective (DAPRO), academia, international and national and local organizations.

The goal of the Alliance is to improve access to quality and sustainable WASH services in schools, through analysis, strategy setting, advocacy, training and capacity building. It is critical for the improvement of the wellbeing of the lives of Chadian school children and UNICEF continues to play a catalytic role in supporting it in close collaboration with all stakeholders to ensure a healthy school environment for improving student performance.

Led by the General Director of Planning at the MoE, the Alliance ensures an intersectoral approach to WASH access in schools and a higher priority in the national political agenda while creating synergies amongst the different ministries and stakeholders.

The alignment of the sector is attracting more political attention and more support from international development partners, and so is setting a better enabling environment to ensure a sustained technical and financial support.

Through the development of the WinS Strategy, the Alliance promotes development of the necessary tools for advocacy and monitoring at national and international levels and to mobilize increased resources for the development of the WinS sub-sector in Chad.

Priorities outlined to scale up WinS

The MoE with the National Alliance for Healthy Schools developed a new National Strategy for WinS, which was approved in 2019. The Strategy provides a framework to guide the efforts of the sector to improve access to WASH services in schools. The Strategy integrates menstrual health and hygiene as a fundamental element of WinS and places emphasis on behaviour change as key to reaching sustainability of WinS interventions.

A set of key strategic paths to move forward have been defined, including:

- Sustainable and inclusive access to WASH services for schools;
- Creating good hygiene habits (especially Handwashing with soap (HWS));
- Menstrual hygiene management;
- Norms and standards;
- Training / Capacity building;
- Strengthening the enabling environment;
- Operation and maintenance of WASH infrastructure and equipment;
- Monitoring and evaluation.



A schoolgirl using a handwashing device before going to class. © UNICEF KOREA/2018/Sangmooh Han

The National Strategy supports the country ODF roadmap outcomes. By 2030, 11,783 schools are expected to be ODF. Since the validation of the national Strategy for WinS, a holistic approach is promoted in schools and communities. School-Led Total Sanitation (SLTS) became systematic to promote demand creation in schools. As a result, in 2019, a first cohort of 184 schools were integrated in the sanitation and hygiene programme. Separate latrines for boys and girls were built by the school community.

Simultaneously, teachers educated children on hand washing with soap and proper use of latrines and menstrual health. The schools were used for advocacy and field learning visits.

WASH in Schools COMMON VISION:

By 2030, all school children in Chad benefit from a quality of education¹ through equitable and sustainable access to safe drinking water and sanitation services, and easily apply good hygiene practices.

School Health Clubs Have Been Institutionalized

The Strategy for WinS Schools 2018-2030 has led to the creation of School Hygiene Clubs, as a fundamental tool to promote behaviour change related to WASH at school level.

The clubs are responsible for the development and implementation of an action plan to ensure that students and teachers have access to safe water and adequate sanitation services and hygiene practices.

All activities of the clubs aim at contributing to reaching the national standards for WASH, known as the “Green Flag” level. This level consists of having the right infrastructure, the right use of this

¹ The education and WASH sectors agree that WASH alone cannot guarantee a quality of education but a safe environment for learning.

infrastructure and practicing good hygiene routines daily.

Hygiene Club activities focus on promoting best-sanitation practices, handwashing with soap, drinking safe water, eating food in good hygienic conditions, menstrual hygiene management, setting up a scheme to cover the club's expenses and preparation of events (e.g. World Toilet Day, Handwashing with Soap Day, MHM Day and World Water Day).

Members of the School Hygiene Clubs are students elected by the school community, as well as two teacher representatives and two parents.

Menstrual Health and Hygiene Integrated as a Key Component of WinS

The National Strategy has a dedicated strategic path to MHM showing that it is a priority for the MoE and partners, for girls to study with dignity in a safe and a healthy school environment. The government has shown commitment in reinforcing the enabling environment for more inclusive and sustainable WinS programmes.

The Strategy takes into account concerns and needs of girls. For instance, data that were reviewed during the implementation of the WASH Bottleneck Analysis Tool shows that in 50 schools in Chad, 81% of the girls reported that their infrastructures were not appropriate for them to adequately manage their menstrual hygiene at schools with dignity. 33% of girls did not know about menstruation and how to manage it. Different factors may lead to girls skipping classes, including lack of knowledge on menstrual management and the lack of separated sanitation facilities, access to water and soap.

Given these facts, the National Federation of Students' Parents, FENAPET has taken a lead role as to influence its affiliated Parents' Associations and other stakeholders including government, NGO partners and other key civil society leaders. Field visits were organized to schools and a Menstrual Hygiene Day was celebrated with public broadcasting on the national radio and TV, to raise awareness. A drawing and creative writing contest was organized in schools on menstruation to give

adolescent boys and girls a mean to express their beliefs and feelings. These drawings show the burden associated to menstrual health and became evidence-based advocacy materials.

As a direct consequence of these advocacy efforts, Menstrual Health and Hygiene (MHH) was considered one of the key strategic paths for the development of the new strategy to be implemented in Chad. An extensive list of MHM specific requirements that will guide the ministry and the schools, have been included in the National Strategy.

Some of these requirements are:

- Sanitary facilities adapted to the needs of adolescent girls and female teachers;
- Integrated approach to puberty education for girls and boys through school hygiene clubs, with student booklets and teaching tools for teachers;
- Definition of the minimum components for MHM to be available in Schools;
- Continued access to MHM products at schools, adapted to local context and customs;
- Partnership with the private sector and local suppliers for the manufacture of pads;



Fatimé, changemaker for menstrual health in her school and community in Hadjer Lamis/Chad. © UNICEF CHAD /2019/Davies

- Teacher training on teaching MHM and puberty during their pedagogical retraining and professional courses;
- Identification of male champions can guide activities and advocacy for MHM at different levels;

In 2019, 194 schools integrated MHM into WinS compared to 4 schools in 2018.

Information, Education and Communication Materials Developed

The MoE recognized that behaviour change was a fundamental element to improve effective access to WASH services in schools, and therefore identified “training and capacity building” as one of the strategic paths for the development of the WinS National Strategy.

One of the working groups formed under the National Alliance for Healthy Schools worked to develop Information, Education and Communications (IEC) materials to explain key WASH messages to teachers, parents and students especially on menstrual health.

After reviewing the existing tools and identifying the needs, a first set of learning materials and teaching tools have been developed jointly with a group of adolescents, teachers and tested with selected groups of users and students. Some of these materials have been inspired on existing documents developed with the same purpose by the Governments of Mali and Niger.

These include:

- Teaching support image flipchart on good hygiene practices focused on washing hands with soap and the importance of using toilets;
- Teaching support image flipchart on puberty and menstrual hygiene management;
- School Hygiene Club booklet for students;
- School Hygiene Club guide for teachers;
- Puberty basic information booklet for adolescent boys and girls.

The MoE has conducted an in-house training of 63 trainers on the newly developed WASH in

Schools education tools. Of these, 34 are certified master trainers to support teachers and educators’ training on hygiene and sanitation promotion as well as menstrual health.

In the school year 2019-20, the materials are being used in the 194 schools. For 2020-2021 it is expected to scale up to 767 further schools reaching a total of 174,000 students.

Lessons learned

Find the trigger: The WinS National Strategy process was triggered by the WASH data. With analysed data and information, the Alliance noted that 1.9 million children are at risk in schools and 8 students out of 10 do not have access to WASH (WinS strategy, 2019). Data demonstrated the scope of the problem and triggered the change.

Share the burden: The WinS National Strategy process had advanced the Education sector’s thinking around WASH. It helped promote collaborative approaches between stakeholders for more accountability. Education took the lead and partnered with WASH and Health sectors to create a coalition - the “Alliance”. By strengthening the inter-sectoral coordination, they identified the root causes of the problems and delivered solutions that meet the needs of the Education system;

Stay flexible, adapt and do not rush: An inclusive process led by the government requires flexibility. Chad conducted a stakeholder analysis to make sure that the right people were involved (roles, responsibilities, level of involvement and level of influence). The five working groups were not initially part of the original process or the WASH BAT analysis. The 18-month process was adapted along the way to be more inclusive. The bottleneck analysis generated evidence and helped reach a consensus on key actions to initiate the implementation of the WinS national strategy;

Plan early: To translate the Strategy into action, the Alliance organized a 3-day workshop to prepare its implementation plan. The minimum WinS package started in 200 schools. These schools are used for human interest stories and

field educational visit to document good practices and leverage resources for the sector.

Listen to children's voices: The aim of the strategy is to create a safe environment for pupils. Menstruation is a difficult subject in many societies in Chad. By organizing a simple drawing and creative writing contest, the country was able to capture the perceptions and practices of children. This has been instrumental for advocacy but also feeding the National Strategy with children's voices.

KEY ACTIONS THAT HAVE TRIGGERED THE CHANGE

- **Exploiting data** in a user-friendly format and the WASH BAT analysis to inform the process helped to define the scope of the problem and to trigger commitment for the WinS common vision;
- **Conducting an inclusive stakeholder analysis** as part of the national process to assess their level of influence, involvement and participation facilitated early alignment to the process. FENAPET became a vocal advocate for menstrual health at schools. Puberty and menstrual hygiene management is now taught in 4th grade.
- **Strengthening intersectoral coordination** helped to promote accountability between the key-ministries and to clarify the responsibilities. Thus, WASH is fostered in the education sector.

Next steps

The National Strategy is currently being implemented in around 190 schools in 2019 and expected to scale up in 767 for 2020-2021. In the next months, the WinS programme will continue to be developed in the following ways:

Programme Adjustment

- Revision of WinS norms and standards with key stakeholders. A phased approach based on the 3-star model developed by UNICEF and the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) is being implemented. The WinS norms and standards will be available by November 2020;
- Joint planning of the sanitation programme and WinS programme by synchronizing both approaches, CLTS and SLTS, in 1,900 villages and 767 schools, respectively, thus creating a ripple effect to end OD;
- Integration of menstrual hygiene management in the sanitation and hygiene programme requiring budget adjustment.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

- The WinS programme, as any other activity, needs good monitoring and evaluation systems. Information systems that can be used to collect real and relevant data is still in the design phase. WinS JMP data and indicators will be included in an updated version of the Ministry's information system (SIGE) and will be available in 2021;
- Integration of WASH indicators into Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) to track progress made on improving WinS.
- Monitoring the programme's implementation in the first batch of >400 schools to keep track of all interventions being implemented.



Peer education session on menstrual health in a school in Moito. © UNICEF CHAD /2019/Davies

Advocacy:

- Advocacy with partners to leverage resources and to align to the WinS programme. The ODF roadmap and the national strategy aim at ending OD in 11,783 schools by 2030.

Training:

- Training of trainers and teachers' training on the WASH strategy, tools and materials on WinS, including MHM. Development of new tools and materials for: management and operation of WASH in Schools (for school administrators and technical staff).
- Training modules for the School Management Committees and teachers involved in Hygiene Clubs on WASH related budgeting, cash and accounting procedures and management.

Scaling Up:

- Scaling up the phased approach (orange, yellow and green flag levels) in 2,614 schools of the 8 priority provinces.

Financing:

Without the financial commitment of the partners, domestic funds of the State, the implementation of the National Strategy is not possible. The Ministry of Education and partners agree to:

- Conduct a cost analysis at all levels for WinS in 2 priority provinces, to create a basis for a more precise budget for inputs and recurrent costs and the necessary long-term funding.
- Advocate with the Ministry of Finance and Budget for a budget line in the MENPC budget dedicated to WinS.
- Include lines for WASH (especially consumables, operation and routine maintenance) in annual provincial budgets and school allocations.
- Seek partner support (private sector, NGO and Parents' Associations) for long-term financing, and involving teachers and School Management Committees to this task.

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ENSEMBLE POUR NOS ÉCOLIERS (Together for our School Children)



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