WASH in Schools Country Profile
MALAWI

A. Enabling Policy Environment for WASH in Schools

- The National School WASH Assessment, the country’s first ever comprehensive analysis of water, sanitation, and hygiene in primary schools was completed in 2008. The need to have a national assessment on the water, sanitation, and hygiene in primary schools was expressed at different fora since 2002. The assessment was guided by issues raised in the National Water Policy (2007) and the National Sanitation Policy (2008). The assessment was conducted in 5,379 of the country’s 5,460 schools, giving a 98.5% response rate.
- The Education sector is guided by core policy documents; the Education Act (1962); the National Education Sector Plan (NESP, 2008); The Education Policy and Investment Plan (PIF 2002); and the National Strategy for Community Participation in Primary School Management (2004). Other related guiding documents include the National Water Policy (2007); the National Sanitation Policy (2008); the National Decentralization Policy (2005); the National Gender Policy (2004); and the National HIV Policy, among others. These policies provide a framework for facilitating improved water supply, sanitation, and hygiene, in enhancing quality education in primary schools.
- UNICEF, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education is currently in the process of recruiting a team of consultants to research and recommend suitable latrine designs for Malawi’s primary schools, which can then be incorporated into the ‘Norms and guidelines for Primary School Construction’ manual, which is currently being finalised.
- The Netherlands Government, Belgian and UK NatComs and GUCCI are currently the major donor for WASH in Schools.
- UNICEF, CPAR, DAPP, Save the Children, WaterAid, Water For People, GIZ, InterAide and WorldVision are key partners for WASH in Schools.

B. Quality and Coverage of WASH in Schools Programming

- The introduction of the Free Primary Education Policy made primary education universally accessible to all school age children in 1994. These events had an impact on the quality of education as well as on water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities in schools. New schools were established in sites that in some cases were not suitable for the purpose, and this was particularly serious with the private sector; and with the introduction of free primary education the number of pupils became disproportionate to the facilities available, particularly on school water, sanitation, and hygiene (School WASH).
- The School WASH Assessment report has helped to assess the gaps in Primary Schools throughout the country, and increased awareness of the importance of safe, private and adequate facilities.
- Since 2008 several water, sanitation and hygiene indicators have been included in the EMIS system to allow for annual monitoring.

C. Highlights and Main Challenges for WASH in Schools

- The sustainability of school WASH facilities is a challenge with limited resources and capacity for school operation and maintenance
- Conditions for WASH in schools are poor throughout the country, though better in schools with fewer pupils (some rural schools in the North)
- The cost of meeting WASH in Schools standards in Malawi is estimated at 10.2 USD/pupil. (2008 estimates)
- There is lack of sustainable funding for developing WASH in Schools.
- Recently a School WASH focal point has been appointed within the Ministry of Education, which is expected to improve the coordination in the Ministry as well as with partners
D. Reference Materials

Following WASH in Schools documents are attached.

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<tr>
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<th>National Plan of Action/National Strategy Documents</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Technical Manuals for WASH in Schools</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Hygiene Promotion Guidelines and Materials</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Evidence Base for WASH in Schools</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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WASH related data

- In 2008, water supply coverage was calculated at 66%, (2008 national census,) and during the recent estimates, there has been an increase of about 10%. Most of the safe water in the country is accessed through boreholes (48%), piped water (20%) and through protected wells (6%). About 26% of the people have water through unprotected water (18%), rivers and streams (7%) and pond/lake (1%). The Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) target is to achieve 80% coverage by 2013; 85% by 2015 and full coverage by 2025. This includes improving access to piped water for 85% of urban inhabitants and 50% for town and market centres by 2011 and safe potable water for 70% of rural inhabitants within 500 meters of their dwelling. Malawi’s MDG for water supply is in accordance with the 1990 world average estimate of 74%.

- The Ministry of Irrigation and Water Development (MoIWD) Statistics indicate that basic sanitation coverage has now reached 94% which is considerably higher than many other Sub-Saharan countries. However, access to an improved latrine is estimated at 46% in rural areas and 65% in urban areas and safe hygiene practices such as using soap and water for hand washing at critical times is reportedly relatively high at 46% (MoIWD, 2009). However the more detailed statistics from national census only capture basic toilet facility use hence making it difficult to get details at district level regarding improved latrine availability.

WASH in Schools related data

- A full 81.5% of schools use drinking water from a protected water source; however, an unprotected water source is still used as the main drinking water source in 18.5% of schools
- In 23% of primary schools are sanitary facilities present in acceptable quality and quantity, with less than 60 learners per improved sanitary facility. Improved facilities are in use in another 40% of schools, but in inadequate numbers. There are 33% that have only basic sanitation, and 4% of schools have no facilities available for disposal of human waste.
- Improved urinals are recommended in order to keep the acceptable ratio of pupils to latrine at 60:1, -if there are no urinals the recommended ratio would be only 25 pupils per latrine. However, only 12.8% of schools in the country have improved urinals for girls, and 17.2% have likewise for boys.
- Only 4.2% of primary schools have hand washing facilities in use and with soap available. Another 14% have hand washing facilities in use, but without soap; and a full 81% of schools do not provide the learners with any facilities for washing hands while in school.