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Monrovia, November 5, 2019

Water Sanitation and Hygiene for Schools Program Report (WASH and Women Department BTFS LMT) Bernice M. Kromah & Mrytle Bowier

Region: District #6, SD Cooper Road
Status: Wash Improvement
Theme: Good hygiene brings better health.
Program Date: October 25, 2019

Goal: To improved health and hygiene education opportunities for children and community in SD Cooper Road, through implementation of safe water, hand washing Facilities and sanitary human waste disposal practices. The program meets clear needs in this region. The funding for the program is for the training of students in basis sanitation and senatorial materials. The program initiates the very objectives of BTFS as it relates to the environmental health awareness and livelihood of the community dwellers.

Background Information: Living condition in the SD Cooper road clear shows that water distribution system and hygiene practices, especially among children are in a crumbling state. More and more systems are in despair and hygiene practices and water supply for large portion of the community, especially in various schools within the community are becoming inadequate causing many people to use alternative and unsafe water sources. The schools among many locations has become a center place for the spread of diseases and other sicknesses. Children in school have little or no idea about personal hygiene and sanitation, thus making it even easier to acquire and transmit diseases. The WASH-to-School program is covering two schools which are part of our community, and about 2/3 of the children from the communities are attending one of the two selected schools, which makes it easier to reach out to more home within our communities.

Technically, health and hygiene education in school focused on covering the theory and memorization of facts from hygiene practices. Children having little or no knowledge on these topics and infrastructure of the schools make it even difficult for instructors to demonstrate the essences of these topics to young students. Children being a building block of our society could serve a bigger role in the vision of creating a green and clean environment, through examples to their parents and younger ones.

Why we did it: The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), call for universal access to safe water, dignified sanitation and hygiene (WASH) for all by 2030. For children, this extends beyond the confines of the household to a child's place of school and play. With children spending several hours a day and over a decade of their growing years in schools, basic access to sustainable WASH in schools is not only crucial for their health and well-being, but it is also a fundamental human right. The high incidence of communicable disease particularly among

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children are due to poor personal hygiene practices, unsanitary environments as well as unsafe drinking water. Improved hygiene practices are essential if we want to prevent transmission routes of fecal-oral diseases. Appropriate hygiene education can only bring about positive hygiene behavior which is also related to appropriate water and sanitation facilities. Schools are the most important places of learning for children, after the family. Schools are stimulating learning environments for children. If sanitary facilities are available in schools, they can act as models, and teachers can function as role models. Schools can also influence communities through outreach activities by their students. Schools are in touch with a large proportion of the households in the community. The Bowier Trust Foundation Liberia Management Team through the WASH and Women Department initiated a WASH program in two local schools. The WASH-to-Schools program was initiated to improve the health education of the students and provide basic handwashing facilities.

How We did it: The WASH Team and the Women Department, headed by Bernice Kromah and Myrtle Bowier respectively, did an investigation in the drop-out of students most especially girls in two Local schools (Immanuel Christian Academy and African Cooperative School). Based on the finding of our investigations, the joint team of WASH and women department thought to raise awareness to promote Health Education among children in our communities. The awareness was initiated to teach young children about sanitation and hygiene and how they can imp their homes with it. The awareness also improve the living standards of the people in our local communities through healthy living and reduce the school drop-outs by. Access to WASH and related handwashing facilities in schools enhances children's growth and development, minimizes the spread of disease in school settings and helps contribute to education outcomes, including enrolment rates, attendance, and students' cognitive functions. It also plays a role in securing gender equality and promoting inclusion. Several recent studies show that inadequate WASH services in schools contribute to higher repetition and dropout rates for girls, compared to boys of similar age and grade.

The WASH-to-School organized a one-day program with other Stake-holders like the Benson Hospital in Paynesville to teach both the students and teachers of our two schools on sanitation and hygiene, and how why it matters. The program consists of the talking section where students from both schools were taken to the ICA campus and listen as the Head Nurse



(Mrs. Theresa Kwalula) from the Benson Hospital spoke about Good Hygiene and Sanitation. Mrs. Theresa explained to the young student about their roles in our society and how they can impact the environment with their actions. Mrs. Theresa Kawlula spoke to students about Menstrual Hygiene, handwashing and how to Keep a Good Body Hygiene.

The Facilitator also spoke about the related sicknesses that emerged from unhygienic behaviors and from the origin and into the body. The facilitator was so given the opportunity to demonstrate a good handwashing routine and how they impact our health. Some students both male and female were given opportunities to ask questions concerning the topics and answers were given by Mrs. Theresa Kwalula. The program also went on explaining the role of the teachers in the WASH program and their responsibilities as role models to students. The program came to an end with the distribution of senatorial materials o the both schools.



The supplies included:

- ✓ Drinking Containers
- ✓ Handwashing Buckets
- ✓ Liquid Soap supplies for the two schools
- ✓ Janitorial supplies for schools' washrooms

The WASH-to-School program have set up WASH Clubs in both schools with the teachers and students which will relate to the WASH team of BTFS with school problems while monitoring and evaluation are on-going. The plan is to integrate older students from the school within the WASH program as a mean to get involve within the health problems in the school and serve as role model or their younger ones. The WASH-to-School also put increasing focus on open defecation and how fecal contamination can be a high environmental challenge.

The facilitator told students about the dangers of human body waste in the environment and to their lives.

Conclusion/What's Next: Increasing student's knowledge about health, hygiene/sanitation, and disease prevention is not enough if it is not applied in their daily life. When enabling and reinforcing factors support knowledge, desirable changes may occur in the school setting and the community. This stresses the importance of combining hygiene education with the construction of water and environmental sanitation facilities and involving the community and health institution in school sanitation. Good school sanitation and hygiene program is a package program, including:

- A participatory needs assessment involving students/teachers and parents/community members;
- Formulations of input, process and output;
- Improved water supply and sanitation facilities;
- Properly used and maintained facilities;
- Hygiene education for students;
- Appropriate and related teaching materials;
- Training for teachers and students' clubs/groups;

- Involvement of students, teachers and School Management Committees (SMC) in planning, implementation and maintenance;
- Improved facilities and hygiene education going hand in hand;
- Monitoring of the programme and its impact, with a focus on self-assessment;
- Orientation for School Management Committees (SMC) and Village Development Committees (VDC);
- Provision of long-term vision and regularization.

The WASH-to-School program has formulated schemes and ideas on how to keep the children focus on these WASH-related topics and also sustained the WASH clubs in both schools. The WASH clubs in the two schools will set up a campaign to promote good hygiene and sanitation within the school and eventually into the communities through the students' homes. The WASH club also has a series of programs that will be huge fundraising that will be used to continue the support of the school's sanitation. The WASH club has a "Spare Change Drop" campaign that will collect funds from students, teachers, and administrators on the campuses as a part of a sustainability plan. Another plan is being drafted to take the sanitation message to the communities through series of programs of which a wide community awareness is to be carried out with the students and some members of the communities. The awareness to include an introduction to public hygiene to our community as we prepare them to take responsible of the proposed plan to construct an open drainage line to the ocean. The WASH-to-school project, with the collaborations with the schools' authorities and the PTA, will development fund raising activities that will compensate the financial need to build other Sanitation facilities to other schools which not have them yet. This will prove very valuable in our efforts to tackle the public health problem at our schools, communities, and the nation at large.

