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**DELIVERING WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE SERVICES
IN AN UNCERTAIN ENVIRONMENT**

**Restoring child dignity through WASH in schools:
an urban study of Kiddawalime Primary School, Kampala**

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Kiddawalime is a community primary school located in Lubyia Parish, Kampala. In 2009 Kiddawalime had 570 pupils from low income households and a dilapidated, four-stance, sex disaggregated latrine used by both students and teachers and no hand washing facilities. With no source of safe water, relying on a swamp shared with neighboring communities, poor health led to high rates of absenteeism, poor performance and high expenditure on health care. In mid-2010, the student population had dropped from 570 to 380. With continued withdrawal of pupils by parents and the threat of closure by the Municipal Public Health department the Education Officer advised the school authorities to seek CIDI's intervention given its work and reputation with WASH initiatives. This paper outlines the impact of this intervention on the students and the greater community, and how the success at one school can act as a model for other school in the District.

Background

Since 1996 Community Integrated Development Initiatives (CIDI) has been working to improve WASH condition in schools with support from WaterCan. Despite the fact that the average number of people with access to safe water in Uganda's rural and urban areas has improved from 27% in 1986 to 70% in 2010, there are still major discrepancies in access to both water and sanitation. Access to water for urban and peri-urban areas is costly despite access to water being a universal human right. According to the Ministry of Water and Environment (MoWE) Sector performance report 13.8 million Ugandans still use unsanitary or shared latrines and 3.2 million practice open defecation. In schools, the pupil to latrine ratio is 69: 1, below the national standard of 40:1. Poor sanitation cost Uganda 389 billion Uganda Shillings annually with open defecation accounting for up to a loss of USD 41million (MoWE 2011/12 pg 4) .With regard to access to water supply, access has stagnated at 65% for the last three years estimated that 78% of poor urban households and 68% of schools did not have (or use) hand washing facilities, with pupil to stance ratio which stood below the recommended 40:1 and 62% of urban poor households still practice open defecation (OD) Uganda's annual water performance report separates safe drinking water access for urban areas into large towns and small towns (MWE, 2008). In 2008, about 4.39 million people lived in 23 large towns and 160 small towns, and 2.69 million Ugandans in these urban areas had access to safe drinking water sources (MoWE 2008). Working within this environmental context, CIDI recognized the possibilities of working with primary schools to improve not only the school environment but the communities as well as a case for the clean water for schools' project (CWfS) which comprised of 5 schools of Kitebi, ABC, Bishop Hannington, Lubiriri and Kiddawalime with a total student population of 5200.

Kiddawalime primary school and the surrounding community unlike her counterparts were fetching water from a contaminated spring well condemned by the water authorities. The other schools had access to piped water but were mainly faced by challenges in as far as costs, reliability and regular supplies were concerned. Given the high costs, in the event that water was disconnected due to non payments, it was even harder buying from vendors hence the need for cheaper and reliable options. For Kiddawalime and her surrounding communities the options were limited since the only option was the contaminated spring well. This resulted in health hazards such as diarrhea, dysentery, stomach pains and typhoid. Consequently this resulted in high rates of absenteeism, poor performance and an increase of household and school expenditure on settling medical bills. According to school records, an average of 54% of 22 school days per month was lost to

inadequate sanitary facilities. Girls were disproportionately absent due to menstruation cycle which lasts 3-5 days per month implying that girls lost up to 11+ days per month.

In addition, the poor quality and lack of improved sanitation facilities contributed to a drop in number from 570 pupils to 380 just in one year.

Intervention and methodology

In June 2010, WaterCan approved CIDI's proposal for a school WASH project to support 5 needy schools in Lubaga Municipality through providing clean water, sanitary facilities and sanitation and hygiene trainings under the Clean Water for Schools (CWfS) project. The project covered 5 schools; Kitebi, ABC, Bishop Hannington, Lubiriri and Kiddawalime across 03 zones of the Municipality with a total student population of 5200 of which 2750 are girls and 2450 are boys. The selection of the beneficiary schools was done in partnership with local leaders and Education department of the Municipality after which a needs assessment was done to zero down to the 5 needy primary schools.

The baseline survey, gender and environmental assessments were done to ensure that equity considerations are made as regards design and allocation of facilities. Site identification and verification and facility designs considered parameters such accessibility of the site to the pupils, number of prospective users, existing WASH conditions, demand and need for the WASH facilities and topography were taken into consideration during the project planning phase. Toilet facilities are gender disaggregated for the students with special urinals for the girls. A ramp, rails and an extended door is provided to cater for pupils with disabilities.

As a result of the project implementation Kiddawalime Primary school benefited from the following;

- 10,000 litre rain water harvesting tank.
- 3 Tiva Water Filters to ensure safe water for drinking.
- 5 hand washing facilities, placed near the kitchen, toilets and throughout the school compound
- 5 garbage bins for management of rubbish in the schools.
- Awareness was created for the teachers and pupils. School Health Clubs (SHCs) were formed
At Kiddawalime the School Health club has been very instrumental in spear heading WASH activities in the school and in the community as compared to the rest of the other 4 schools.
- 8 stances pour flush toilet constructed for pupils.

In order to strengthen ownership of the facilities, the School Management Committees (SMC) and the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) were involved from the inception of the project. Before the beginning of any activities especially construction activities, MOUs stipulating the roles and responsibilities of the key stakeholders (that is; CIDI, Private sector, Municipality technocrats and political leaders, the school heads, was signed between CIDI and the school management witnessed by the senior education officer and a representative from the PTA. This is aimed at ensuring ownership and sustainability even after project exit.

The 8 stance pour flush toilet at Kiddawalime was the first of its kind in WaterCan funded schools in Kampala. It has girls' urinal aligned on the curtain wall and this design was one of CIDI's innovation in all the school she has implemented and has been widely publicized. The facility replaced the 4 stance old pit latrine, reducing the pupil stance ratio from 1:142 to 1: 75 despite the increase in enrolment from 380 to 600 pupils to date. The special urinal design has reduced the pupil stance ratio to 1:43 where the urinals have complemented the toilets thus reducing the long queues in the girls section. However, the design is more appropriate for use by children of below 10 years old making it hard for girls in their menstruation periods to use these facilities. Basing on this, the young ones use the urinals creating space and privacy for the older girls.

Kiddawalime was very cooperative during the implementation of the project and her SHC spearheaded several community clean ups and participated in sensitization of the wider community through WASH promotional songs and drama. The club made several visits to four other schools on the project that is Lubiri primary school, Kitebi day and boarding primary school, Bishop Hannington memorial primary school and ABC primary school Nateete carrying WASH sensitization messages to pupils. Just like Kiddawalime, all the rest of the other schools were required to do similar activities but commitment was negligible. This is a challenge experienced in most especially government schools and we think it is because teachers and the heads have a feeling that everything belongs to government and must be provided by government without them having to put extra efforts. Poor time management and supervision, lack of commitment and unnecessary bureaucracy was a challenge.

This explains why the 2 private schools (Kiddawalime and Bishop Hannington memorial school) and 1 Government school (Kitebi day and boarding primary school) were the most actively involved and

committed to the project, but with Kiddawalime superseding all the others. Kiddawalime's uniqueness and popularity stems from other several achievements such as setting up of a demonstration school garden using waste water for watering by the SHC, as well as garbage sorting spearheaded by the Head teacher. With garbage sorting, plastic waste is sold for recycling while the composite garbage is used as manure in the school garden and the excess sold, creating additional revenue for the school.

Through such interactions the school has become a model in the community, opening it to unexpected opportunities such as being preferred by *Inspires Africa* (an organization identifying special attributes) as a model school because of the availability of basic facilities like the toilet, clean safe water and hand washing facilities. This opportunity resulted in establishment of a link between Kiddawalime Primary School and Lynghall Schools in the UK supporting the school in terms of sport development in the of games like rugby, volleyball, net ball among others. This was made possible with support from WaterCan which believes that through provision of water, people's lives do change and this is now evident with Kiddawalime. Had it not been for the better WASH conditions enjoyed in this school, they would not have been identified by Inspires Africa.

The insight in the school WASH project implementation has centered on the strength of WASH in schools as a strong tool that promotes lifelong skills for pupils and households where they act as effective change agents. The behavioral changes in the students and their home members result in healthier communities and therefore improved livelihoods. WASH in schools is a powerful tool for promotion of gender equality as girls keep in school and can compete well with the boys. It has also come out that investment in school WASH can be used as a poverty reduction strategy.

Impact

- School enrollment increased tremendously in a very short period of time; 380 at the time of intervention in 2010 to over 800 by the end of 2012 (416 girls and 384 boys)
- Teachers lobby to be placed at this school
- Absenteeism rates dropped by 38% and this had had a direct impact on academic performance according to testimonies from teachers and the school management
- Fee default rates dropped from about 37% in mid-2011 to less than 20% by the end of 2012
- The school management has also been able to purchase another 30.000 litre water tank largely scaling down WASH related risks like ill health at the school
- The SHC members became change agents to the community and 4 other schools
- The bushes near the school which manicured, the breeding ground for mosquitoes was reduced and an organized school garden was put in place
- The school is in the process of undertaking more constructions due to increased enrollment and better school income.
- The school is now a satellite site for all CIDI School WASH activities in Lubaga Municipality.

Lessons learnt

- Many school authorities don't understand the value of water, sanitation and hygiene and therefore need sensitization through training
- A school has great influence on the attitudes and perceptions of the community, especially in matters concerning water, sanitation and hygiene
- Water, sanitation and hygiene issues have a direct impact on peoples' health and income and savings
- A lot of work hours are lost due avoidable illnesses, largely attributed to poor hygiene behavior and
- An area with good water, sanitation and hygiene infrastructure attracts many inhabitants fostering development in the area.



Photograph 1. Students benefiting from new RWHT (2011)

Source: CIDI



Photograph 2. Old facility where pupils had to queue (2009)

Source: CIDI



Photograph 3. Urinals for girls SWASH adapting the technological innovation by CIDI (2011)

Source: CIDI

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