



WinS-ILE Outcome Document 2016

Context and background

WASH in Schools (WinS) contributes to fulfilling the right of every child to health, education, and dignity. South/East Asian and Pacific regions are making progress on WinS, but the SDG challenge of universal coverage requires sustained commitment and strong partnerships.

UNICEF and GIZ initiated the *WASH in Schools (WinS) International Learning Exchanges (ILE)* in 2012. Since then the event has grown into an important annual exchange platform for WinS stakeholders and practitioners from governments and WASH partners; meetings were held in the Philippines, India, Laos and Sri Lanka. This 5th ILE on WinS, hosted by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC), brought together 160 participants from 17 countries of the South/East Asian and Pacific regions, representing government ministries, international organizations and research institutions, together with invited WASH experts from the respective networks of GIZ and UNICEF.

The rationale and motivation for the ILE grew from the increasing international momentum for WASH in Schools and a growing community of practitioners, keen on benefiting from exchange, sharing of knowledge and alignment around best practice approaches. The first event coincided with the development of the UNICEF/GIZ *Three Star Approach for WASH in Schools* (TSA), which has since then inspired stakeholders and innovated WinS programming in a number of countries.

Purpose

This outcome document provides a summary of the most relevant observations, learnings and recommendations, including the commitments and action plans of the 5th WinS ILE in Jakarta (14-18 November 2016). The document represents the consensus among all participants on key areas of action to strengthen national systems and capacity for WinS and recognizes the positive spirit and forward-looking motivation of delegates, who expressed their commitment to use this document as guidance in future work towards universal access to WinS. Full and detailed coverage of all sessions and discussions will be available at a later stage in a formal conference report.

Objectives of the 5th ILE on WASH in Schools

1. Updating on WinS progress in each participating country, sharing knowledge and identifying areas of collaboration;
2. Sharing lessons learned and experiences for advocacy and improving political commitment for WinS;
3. Advancing technical knowledge on critical issues affecting scale-up of WinS including Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) and the SDGs, group handwashing with soap, Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM), financing, group handwashing, and Operation & Maintenance (O&M) of WASH in Schools.

ILE Programme

The five-day event, hosted by the MoEC, consisted of a series of sessions related to country updates on WinS progress through short video clips, updates and guidance from international experts on global policies with a focus on the SDGs and their monitoring, interactive group work to discuss, share and deepen understanding of five identified key areas comprising M&E, O&M, MHM, group handwashing and sustainable financing. A site visit to Bandung (West Java) to learn from implementation added hands-on experience and field reality from Indonesia, complemented by selected case examples of progress and solutions developed in participating countries. A set of sessions held in Bahasa Indonesia covered topics specific to Indonesia, for other sessions simultaneous interpretation was available. A closing session on the last day focused on advocacy for WinS, linked the proceedings to World Toilet Day on the following day, and provided participants with momentum and encouragement in their daily work.

Summary, key learnings and commitments

The participants of the *5th International Learning Exchange on WASH in Schools* coming from 17 countries commend the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture, GIZ and UNICEF for providing an opportunity for exchange and learning on important aspects around WASH in Schools.

Participants acknowledge that:

- The crucial lead role of the Education Sector in managing, maintaining, funding and monitoring WASH in Schools, in collaboration with other related sectors, must be universally recognized and should be promoted, strengthened and enhanced wherever possible;
- Strong political will and leadership at all levels is needed to achieve sustainable WASH in all schools and that regional and global initiatives can constructively facilitate focus national attention on WinS;
- Access to basic water, sanitation and hygiene in schools is integral part of all children's rights and anchored in the United Nation's Human Right to water and sanitation;
- The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDGs 4 and 6, give strong targets to provide universal access to WinS as part of a healthy and safe school environment conducive to learning and well being;
- The SDGs provide new momentum and unique opportunities to strengthen all elements required for successful implementation so that the target of universal access to basic WASH in Schools services by 2030 becomes a reality.

All participants recognize and affirm that:

- WASH in Schools needs to be based on the guiding principles of equality, be gender-sensitive, child-friendly, promote inclusiveness, support early childhood development, and promote active learning through skills-based hygiene and behaviour change education, be based on best possible evidence and fostering community involvement;
- WASH in Schools must go beyond solely providing "hardware" infrastructure and facilities, but requires regular maintenance, sufficient supplies, management and financing at all levels, involvement of parents and communities and other "software" interventions, such as behaviour change interventions, as part of a comprehensive package;
- Implementing WinS at scale must take a systemic and holistic view, including involvement, roles and responsibilities of stakeholders and actors on all levels;
- WinS is led, coordinated and managed by the education sector and guided by a WinS policy at national level, with full involvement and participation of other related sectors depending on local settings, including the sectors of health, public works, water and sanitation, environment, finance, local government, communities and others;
- Sub-national or local governments need support to enable them to effectively and efficiently implement WinS;
- Supporting the development of institutional and individual capacity, particularly within the education sector, to implement, monitor, and manage WinS at national, sub-national and school level (School Based Management) is required.

Monitoring & evaluation (M&E)

- Monitoring and evaluation is a critical and integral element of WASH in Schools, both for management and to track progress towards national targets and the SDGs;
- The *Core Questions and Indicators for Monitoring WASH in Schools in the SDGs* provide guidance to adapt national frameworks to measure progress against the SDG target of universal access to WASH in Schools by 2030;
- National, regional and global baselines are needed using the harmonized SDG indicators and countries should already report on aspects of the SDG criteria based on available data;

- National *Education Management Information Systems* (EMIS) should include indicators for WASH in Schools, using the core questions and indicators of the SDGs so that service levels (service quality) may be reported;
- Comprehensive management of WinS programmes requires additional information beyond EMIS data; the expanded SDG questions may be used as guidance in defining more detailed indicators; and other data sources may be required to oversee financial and resource management, implementation quality and programme performance;
- M&E is essential for accreditation systems such as the Three Star Approach, to reward and recognize performance of schools, improves resource allocation, strengthens transparency and accountability as well as overall policy implementation, including national standards for WASH in Schools;
- Continued research on WinS impacts on behaviour, education and health is needed.

Operation & maintenance (O&M)

- O&M is crucial to provide quality WASH services and to meet the SDG targets;
- Adequate management and resource provisions for O&M are at least as important as innovation and new construction;
- Clarity of roles and responsibilities, together with transparency about costs and resource needs are crucial to ensure proper O&M using School-based Management (SBM);
- Decisions on new infrastructure should be made on the basis of resources available, including the long-term O&M resources;
- Long-term appropriate budget allocations from government sources should be made while schools need to find short-term solutions.

Menstrual hygiene management (MHM)

- Addressing MHM in Schools can contribute towards transforming gender roles and improving education outcomes for girls; it is therefore an important element of WASH in Schools and proxy indicator of progress in gender equality in education;
- The SDG definition for basic sanitation (including gender-separate toilets) and hygiene (including handwashing facilities with water and soap) can support basic menstrual hygiene needs and must be part of minimum standards;
- The expanded SDG indicators for WinS include specific questions to support MHM-related data collection in EMIS;
- All opportunities for monitoring MHM services as part of WinS, as well as strengthening the evidence for improvements in knowledge, attitudes and practices should be used to ensure MHM is achieving its desired goals.

Handwashing

- Handwashing with soap is a key hygiene behaviour that must be part of WASH interventions aiming at forming lifelong healthy habits;
- Handwashing habits are improved through a combined effort of increased knowledge, providing an enabling environment as well as organizational and systems improvements, including the regular supply of water and soap;
- Group handwashing using appropriate facilities allows large groups of children to wash their hands at critical times (such as before eating) and helps foster habit formation;
- Group handwashing is part of the Three Star Approach and is included in the expanded SDG WASH questions and indicators and should be encouraged wherever appropriate.

Sustainable financing

- Costs for WASH in Schools should be quantified, including hardware investments, software costs and O&M;
- A common financing strategy for the sector, emphasizing the role of the national government in providing resources required;
- Financial management at the school level is required to ensure quality WASH in Schools services including O&M; avoiding additional financial burden on parents;
- Sustainable financing is needed for capacity building and research related to WinS.

While acknowledging that progress in WinS has been made, participants reconfirm the relevance of the following six action points of the *Joint Call to Action for WASH in Schools (2012)* (abbreviated and adapted):

1. Set minimum standards for WASH in Schools

Adopt national, regional and local standards for WASH in Schools, aligned with the SDG WASH in Schools Service definitions. Standards may be the basis for national action plans aiming to reach all schools within a concrete time frame and should allow for gradual improvements of facilities and hygiene practices (e.g. by using the principles of the Three Star Approach for WASH in Schools).

2. Monitor WASH in Schools coverage through national monitoring systems (e.g. EMIS)

Advocate for the inclusion of WASH in Schools indicators in EMIS and use the data for advocacy, better resource allocation, and global reporting towards the SDGs. Gather nationally representative data on WASH in Schools to determine baseline estimates for the SDGs.

3. Engage with at scale WASH in Schools programmes

Alignment and coordination along a national WASH in Schools agenda, using common approaches helps towards universal coverage. Only interventions that are simple and sustainable can be successfully scaled up.

4. Involve multiple stakeholders to support WASH in Schools programmes.

Broad involvement of stakeholders and sectors helps to generate sustainable support for WASH in Schools, based on clear roles and responsibilities.

5. Contribute evidence on the impact of WASH in Schools programmes

Generating and sharing evidence will strengthen future programme design and provides WASH in Schools advocates with a powerful tool to attract attention and funding to the sector.

6. Raise the profile of WASH in Schools programmes

Continued advocacy for WASH in Schools at all levels, building on evidence, local experience and the broader society impact are key in making WASH in Schools a responsibility for all.

Finally, participants commit to:

- Engage with their respective work environments and organizations to share the lessons learnt from the ILE;
- Critically review and adapt their strategies, action plans and other programmatic documents on the basis of the ILE country action plans, so that their interventions reflect the insights from the ILE wherever appropriate;
- Prioritise alignment, integration and adaptation of the SDG WASH in Schools monitoring agenda in national planning and monitoring frameworks, especially EMIS;
- Focus on simple, sustainable, and scalable approaches to WASH in Schools;
- Use the informal networks of like-minded colleagues and professionals from the two regions and beyond, and maintain an active exchange, e.g. using the UNICEF WinS network (Yammer) or the platform of the Sustainable Sanitation Alliance (SuSanA); and to
- Seek technical support whenever required from UNICEF, GIZ and development partners to help overcome challenges in conceptualisation and management of programmes.

Agreed by the participants of the *5th International Learning Exchange for WASH in Schools*, held in Jakarta, Indonesia, on 14-18 November 2016.

References

- Raising even more clean hands – Call to Action: <http://uni.cf/2fYyYXA>
- Three Star Approach for WASH in Schools: <http://uni.cf/2gjBOcp>
- Core Questions and Indicators for Monitoring WASH in Schools in the SDGs: <http://bit.ly/2eKLqrF>
- JMP data drive for WinS: <http://www.wssinfo.org/sdg-baselines>

Internet exchange platforms

- UNICEF WASH in Schools Network – Yammer; www.yammer.com/washinschoolsnetwork
- Sustainable Sanitation Alliance (SuSanA): www.susana.org/en/