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**SUSTAINING WATER AND SANITATION SERVICES FOR
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**Facilities management plan: tool for effective operation
and maintenance of school WASH facilities**

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BRIEFING PAPER 1994

A School Health Education Programme (SHEP) Policy and Strategy Framework was developed for Ghana in 2010 and launched in 2014. Safe water and sanitation are key components of the policy. A National Strategy for WASH in Schools has been developed under this component. To ensure the sustainability of school WASH facilities, a comprehensive Facilities and Management Plan (FMP) was developed. The inability of existing schools to properly operate and manage their WASH facilities was found to be one of the main challenges leading to the breakdown of facilities provided. The FMP focuses on the necessary actions, and the people responsible to make sure the actions are taken to ensure the sustainability of what is provided. It also provides a costing framework which will enable school authorities and the managers of schools to provide the appropriate resource when required for the well-being of school children in Ghana.

Introduction

Well-designed WASH facilities do not necessarily guarantee that the facilities will be actually used or if they would be used properly. It does not also guarantee that the facilities will be well maintained in a hygienic and sustainable manner so that it will last up to its design life and the health and social well-being of school children will be achieved.

The Facilities Management Plan (FMP) is a document that expresses the commitment of a school to ensuring the proper Operation and Maintenance (O&M) of the School WASH Facilities including Toilet, Hand Washing facilities and to ensure the school environment is kept in an environmentally friendly and healthy manner. The commitment made by the signatories to the FMP is supposed to be binding on the school and is to be used to assess how well the school is in maintaining a healthy environment conducive to the health and well-being of the school children.

The FMP forms a key component of the National Implementation Model for WASH in Schools in Ghana which focuses on creating overall awareness on the importance of WASH in Schools, Stimulating a positive environment to advocate and implement improved WASH in Schools and Changing social norms making unhealthy and unhygienic schools unacceptable. The Hygiene Education and Children as Agents of Change component of the National Implementation Model is used together with the FMP and the Technical Guide to ensure the children receive the relevant knowledge and acquire the necessary habits to enable them serve as agents of change in their communities.

Preparation of the FMP

The preparation of the FMP involves all the key stakeholders so they know their roles and responsibilities and they play their roles to ensure the sustainability of the WASH facilities provided. The FMP is discussed with the School Health Committee and completed by the Head Teacher on behalf of the school. Once the document is filled and signed, it is submitted to the Local Government (Municipal/District Assembly) and the School Health Education Programme (SHEP) Coordinator who in turn endorses it and passes it on to the Municipal/District Works Department for verification and endorsement. The completed and endorsed FMP is distributed to the Municipal/District Education Office, the Municipal/District Assembly and the

original sent to the school to enable the relevant authorities at the different levels monitor the implementation of FMP in conjunction with other school WASH activities.

Components of the FMP

The FMP focuses on various aspects of school WASH services. Key among them are:

- Hand Washing and Hygiene
- Water Supply
- Toilets and Urinals
- Menstrual Hygiene Management
- Solid Waste Disposal and Drainage

The key components of the FMP include the following:

- Basic information about the school
- Existing WASH Facilities and their state
- Institutional setup for the management of the school
- Members of the School Health Committee
- Funding for School WASH activities
- Proposal for new/additional facilities
- Operation and maintenance schedule, activities and personnel
- Declaration and signature of the FMP by all key stakeholders

A breakdown of the operation and maintenance activities provides the details for the following which are essential for the effective O&M

- Responsibilities for O&M
- Cleaning tools, equipment and material requirement
- Cleaning activities for toilets and urinals
- Cleaning activities for other WASH facilities
- Estimated annual O&M cost.

Policy and institutional framework

The existing policies in the country are favourable for ensuring appropriate management and maintenance of school WASH facilities. The key policies/strategies include the following:

- The School Health Education Programme Policy (SHEP) - 2012
- The National Health Policy (NHP) - 2007
- The Environmental Sanitation Policy (ESP) - 2010
- The Rural Sanitation Model and Strategy (RSMS) - 2011
- The National Water Policy (NWP) - 2007
- The Children's Act - 1998

Key stakeholders

The key stakeholders who have responsible for School Health Education include the followings:

- School Health Education Programme, Ghana Education Service: Co-ordinate and monitor all SHEP activities among partners at all levels and provide leadership for advocacy and capacity building for SHEP implementing stakeholders as well as initiate research, documentation and knowledge management of SHEP activities.
- Ghana Health Service/Ministry of Health (MoH): Provide guidance on the environmental health aspects of school design, construction and maintenance. Monitor environmental health conditions, monitor child health. Provide technical assistance for the production of relevant IEC materials for the programme.
- Environmental Health and Sanitation Directorate (EHSD), Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD): Coordination and formulation of policy, model bye-laws, technical guidelines, monitoring and evaluation and fund mobilization for the sector. Ensuring the provision and maintenance of safe school structures and other health-promoting facilities, including ventilation, lighting, toilets, safe water, safe play and recreational grounds and security;
- Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs): By the Local Government Act (Act 462), the MMDAs are responsible for the delivery, monitoring and evaluation of environmental sanitation

services. The Waste Management Departments/Units and Environmental Health Units are responsible for the delivery of the services for the MMDAs as well as monitoring of services ceded to the private sector. Monitoring to ensure school WASH facilities are properly maintained and operated. Monitoring food vendors are properly certified and have the capacity to provide services to schools.

- The Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA): Facilitate the provision of water and sanitation facilities in schools which should be environmental, gender, child and disability friendly.
- The private sector provides services at all levels for School Health initiatives in accordance with the national standards, guidelines and regulations.
- The Coalition of NGOs in Water and Sanitation (CONIWAS): "works in partnership with sector players to influence policies, remove barriers and promote access to potable water, sanitation and improved hygiene for the poor and vulnerable" including schools.

Challenges

There are a number of challenges that have militated against the smooth running of school WASH facilities which the implementation of the FMP is expected to address:

- Unavailability of an appropriate and uniform policy framework for the implementation of the school WASH programmes.
- Low level of commitment on the part of school heads on the importance and health benefits of properly maintained school WASH facilities.
- Inadequate provision of funds for school WASH facilities including an appropriate budgeting framework.

Key O&M activities

A number of operation and maintenance activities have been identified as critical and need to be undertaken to ensure sustainability of the School WASH Facilities:

Table 1. Key O&M activities for school WASH facilities	
WASH facility	Key O&M activities
Toilet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaning of walls and floors • Cleaning of toilet bowls/drop holes • Cleaning of hand washing basins/drains • Sweeping • Weeding around facilities • General cleaning of buildings and surroundings • Inspection and repair of technical components (vents, nets, chambers, plumbing etc) • Inspection and repair of electrical works • Emptying of pits/tanks
Hand washing facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand washing containers must be cleaned daily • Hand washing containers must be disinfected weekly. • Taps must be repaired immediately leakages appear. • Ensure drains and/or soak away are clean and functional.
Water supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure there is a fetching vessel under the tap when tap is opened except when hands are being washed. • Repair all leakages immediately they appear on storage tanks, along pipe lines and at the taps. • Ensure drains and/or soak away are clean and functional. • Clean area around tap/ fetching point daily. • Ensure storage tanks are cleaned at least once a year.
Cleaning of school compound	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School compound must be swept regularly (at least once a week). • Weeding of school compound must be done at least once a term. During the rainy season weeding must be done monthly.

Solid waste disposal	<p>Bins should be provided for the collection of solid waste.</p> <p>Source separation and recycling of waste may be carried out. Special bins will be provided for organics, paper and plastics separately.</p> <p>Paper and plastics will be sent for recycling especially when collection agents or the recycling agents are available in the district.</p> <p>Where composting of organic fraction of waste is carried out, it should be done under strict supervision of a teacher who has the technical know-how.</p> <p>All bins and surrounding areas, especially bins for the organic fraction of the waste shall be kept clean.</p>
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Responsibilities for O&M activities

A number of operation and maintenance activities have been identified as critical and need to be undertaken to ensure sustainability.

No.	Activity	Responsibility	How often
1	Resource mobilisation for O&M	School Management Committee (SMC)/Parent Teacher Association (PTA)	Every term
2	Periodic repairs	SMC/PTA/School Head	Annually
3	Monitoring	EHO/SHEP	Twice a term
4	Supply of consumables	SMC/PTA/ Capitation Grant	Every term
5	Supervision	School Head/ Teacher on duty/ Hygiene Coordinator	Daily
6	Cleaning and general maintenance	Pupils or employed cleaner	Daily

Conclusion

Ensuring the long-term sustainability of School WASH facilities is the major for the development of the Facilities Management Plan (FMP) for all schools in the country. The experience in the country showed a number of abandoned facilities and facilities which were not properly used. The key benefit of the FMP is that it identifies clearly the various WASH activities that need to be undertaken at the school level and beyond and the stakeholders responsible for those activities. It also provides a framework for costing which enables the school budget appropriately to ensure the relevant activities are funded and undertaken as and when required.

Schools where the FMP has been used have indicated the satisfaction and the benefits it has brought to the health and well being of pupils in the schools. It is expected that as the FMP is launched across the country, there will be an improvement in the health and well-being of pupils across the length and breadth of Ghana with the availability of appropriate school WASH facilities.

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