School WASH research:
Bangladesh country report

April 2016

Report prepared for WaterAid by Jacques-Edouard Tiberghien, Partnerships in Practice

Contents

Cover image: End of the school day, fringes of Dhaka. Credit: Paul de Nooijer.

Abbreviations

APSC	Annual Primary School Census
DFID	Department for International Development
DPE	Directorate of Primary Education
DPHE	Department for Public Health Engineering
DSHE	Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education
EFA	Education for All
EMIS	Education Monitoring Information System
INGO	International Non-Government Organisation
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JMP	Joint Monitoring Programme
LGED	Local Government Engineering Department
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MHM	Menstrual Hygiene Management
MLGRD&C	Ministry of Local Government Rural Development and Cooperatives
MoPME	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
NCTB	National Curriculum and Textbook Board
O&M	Operation and Maintenance
PEDP	Primary Education Development Programme
PEPMIS	Primary Education Property Management Information System
SACOSAN	South Asian Conference on Sanitation
SHEWA-B	Sanitation, Hygiene Education and Water supply in Bangladesh
SKS	Swayam Krishi Sangam Foundation
SMC	School Management Committee
SLIP	School Level Improvement Plan
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPEP	Upazila Primary Education Plan
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene
WinS	Water Sanitation and Hygiene in Schools

Acknowledgements

The author is grateful for the work of the WaterAid Bangladesh team in preparing the mission and supporting the work of the consultant during the country visit. Special thanks to Mahfuj-ur Rahman (Programme Officer), and Mohammod Kabir (Research Manager), whose very effective engagement in the organisation of all visits and meetings, and coordination with the rest of the team to manage the logistics, security and linguistic aspects of the mission, enabled a productive time in Bangladesh. Many thanks also to Kate Lambert, Regional Support Officer at WaterAid UK, who significantly supported the data collection process in Dhaka and Gaibandha.

The author wishes to thank the partners of WaterAid Bangladesh met during the country visit, including NGO partners, government officials, headteachers, teachers, members of School Management Committees and Parent Teacher Associations, students and community members, and other stakeholders who gave their time to provide the research team with the evidence needed. Finally, the author thanks the Swayam Krishi Sangam (SKS) Foundation for organising the school visits and district workshop in Gaibandha.

Executive summary

Foreword

Over the past 25 years, Bangladesh has almost managed to eradicate open defecation, becoming a role model in the field of sanitation. Although significant efforts remain necessary to consolidate these results, this sanitation breakthrough has already significantly benefitted the health of millions of children.[1]

Similar achievements have also been attained in child education. Since 1990, primary education has been free and compulsory for all children up to grade five (about age ten). Eighteen million students are currently enrolled in over 104,000 primary schools and 15,000 secondary schools. The private sector runs about 63% of primary schools and 98% of secondary schools.[2] During the past decade access to education and gender equity have been enhanced, while a decline in repetition and dropout rates was noted. However, about five million children are still out of school, mostly due to poverty, and the challenges for improving the quality of the education system are daunting and multi-faceted.[3]

J-E Tiberghien

View of rice fields from the window of a school latrine in Gaibandha district.

The enabling environment

Policy

The Bangladeshi legal framework contains a number of policies relevant to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in schools (e.g. rights, education, WASH policies). In 2015, the Ministry of Education issued a Circular to improve WASH conditions in secondary and higher secondary schools, madrassa (Islamic religious schools) and technical and vocational institutions. School WASH is also reflected in national plans, such as the Sector Development Plan 2011-25 for the water and sanitation sector, which builds on the rich experience of over two decades of school WASH programming in the country. There is no specific strategy for school WASH, but both the draft WASH Strategy (2014) and the Hygiene Promotion Strategy (2012) make clear reference to it. The comprehensive School WASH National Standards approved in 2011 by the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, released in 2012, have not yet been disseminated due to technical issues. Government directives to enforce these Standards are lacking.

The Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives has historically led school WASH efforts, alongside the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education and the Ministry of Education. Roles and responsibilities are relatively well defined, but building a momentum around school WASH is rendered difficult by the institutional fragmentation of the education landscape.[4] There is no school WASH platform at national and district level for networking, joint advocacy and programme coordination. School WASH remains much of a donor-driven agenda, channelled through the Primary Education Development Programme III (PEDP-III), and leadership is currently lacking. The call for greater convergence between WASH, health and nutrition has been heard by many organisations, public or not, which are already busy developing practical strategies to that effect.

Planning

There is no specific national plan of action for school WASH. PEDP-III seeks to ensure that 95% of primary schools have at least one functioning toilet, separate functioning toilets for girls, and safe water sources.[5] Critics of PEDP-III stress its exclusive focus on hardware and the outdated nature of the data used for planning.[4] Deficiencies in the targeting process, leading to duplication and exclusion, have also been noted.[6] However, gains in effectiveness and transparency can be expected through online access to the recently developed Primary Education Property Management Information System (PEPMIS). The education sector has been characterised so far by a lack of transparent rules determining public education expenditures. This has favoured intense lobbying, strongly interfering with bottom-up planning processes,[7] which are already affected by a lack of planning skills at sub-district level.

The self-reporting nature of official censuses conducted in schools raises concerns over the robustness of the information collected. The range of indicators used is insufficient to provide a comprehensive picture of adequacy, coverage and usage of school WASH facilities. Overall, the monitoring systems in place do not exert sufficient influence to ensure their proper operation and maintenance. Despite the impressive success achieved on sanitation nationwide, backed up by strong political leadership and community engagement, incentives are still lacking at national and local levels to stimulate stakeholder engagement in school WASH.

Budget

PEDP-III's school WASH funds are exclusively channelled toward the construction of new facilities, covering around 30% of the total need. Very limited resources are available to rehabilitate facilities and deliver training for their good operation and management. Through PEDP-III and via the School Level Improvement Plan (SLIP) grant, each school receives US$390 annually, which can be used to cover all discretionary purchases. It is estimated that US$10 per student needs to be spent on the construction of school WASH facilities and US$1.40 per student needs to be spent annually on all recurrent costs, including direct support for hygiene promotion activities and training students and teachers.[8]

Developing school WASH services

Access

The percentage of primary schools with access to drinking water in-campus progressed from 47% in 1998, to 74% in 2014.[9] 90% of all primary schools rely on tube well water, usually equipped with hand-pumps in rural areas. Water quality is often an issue, either due to microbiological contamination or high arsenic content. A handwashing station is only present in 53% of schools, and even then, is not always accessible to children.[10] 84% of all government primary and secondary schools have access to improved toilets for students.[11] With a median of 187 students per toilet, the student-to-toilet ratio is largely in excess of the 50:1 norm, which makes it more difficult for schools to keep these toilets clean and functional.

Equity

High priority is now given to developing gender separated school WASH facilities: the percentage of schools providing separate functioning toilets for girls officially increased from 31% in 2010 to 64% in 2013.[12] Yet, only 6% of schools have any form of menstrual hygiene facility,[13] or provide menstrual hygiene education sessions for girls.[11] Additionally, only 0.4% of the 19.5 million students enrolled in primary schools are children with disabilities. The recently revised design of the WASH blocks built under PEDP-III address the specific needs of the latter. The coverage of school WASH facilities is much lower in hard to reach areas.[4] Rural-urban disparities are also notable, and coincide with the polarisation of WASH investment in urban areas.

Capacity

National strategies and plans reflect an urgency around promoting improved hygiene practices. In practice however, hygiene promotion remains a bottleneck. Lack of funding, the low quality of training received by teachers on hygiene education and consequently the low priority they place on it, plus a lack of monitoring partly explain this gap. Student brigades introduced by UNICEF under PEPD-II to support WASH objectives are now mainstreamed in PEDP-III as 'student councils', and their responsibilities extend beyond WASH. But in the absence of supporting NGOs, teachers tend to lack the motivation to set up such councils and reactivate them annually. Other forms of student engagement deserve attention, such as adolescent clubs (focusing on menstrual hygiene management [MHM]) and the little doctors.

Sustaining school WASH services

Inputs, committee and budget

School Management Committees and Parent Teacher Associations are responsible for monitoring hygiene sessions and ensuring the proper operation and management of school WASH facilities. Political interference in School Management Committees is frequent, and in practice headteachers are often the sole decision-makers for the Committees. The relatively low concern from School Management Committees about school WASH stems

from a lack of demand across the education system, an absence of tailored training operationalising National Standards, and a lack of sanction and incentive mechanisms.[14] In this context, sustainability of school WASH activity largely relies on the presence of champions within the school.[15]

Schools' ability to raise funds is severely constrained legally, and they depend heavily on government funding for most of their operating expenses. Whilst the SLIP grant hardly suffices to cover all school WASH costs, substantial additional resources can be mobilised by well-managed schools linked to well-organised communities by effective School Management Committees.

Functionality, maintenance and proper use of school WASH facilities

Only four out of every ten latrines in primary schools are unlocked and a quarter of them clean (i.e. clean floor, slab and pan).[11] While 79% of all schools have at least one functional toilet,[10] unhygienic conditions and inadequate facilities contribute to the low utilisation of WASH facilities by students. While most secondary schools employ cleaners, primary schools rely on arrangements involving either student brigades, students, or a hired cleaner or janitor. Such arrangements generally fail to provide regular and effective cleaning. The absence of a maintenance plan, regular cleaning schedule or a specific person held accountable for its implementation are all critical factors. The importance of good school governance cannot be overstated.

Whereas 73% of all schools have access to an improved water source, these are functional all year round in only every second school.[10] About one-third of all schools have water and soap available inside or near an improved functional and un-locked toilet accessible to students.[11] Handwashing stations are most often leaking and in need of repair. Two large-scale surveys recently carried out in Bangladeshi schools show that 28% of all observed students washed both hands during the handwashing demonstration,[11] while 35% of all schools report that, "all or almost all students wash their hands with soap before eating".[10]

Recommendations

The recommendations emerging from this study take into consideration key trends shaping the overall strategy of WaterAid Bangladesh: a move towards systematic district-wide approaches characterised by greater attention to institutional WASH, a focus on WASH-health-nutrition integration, and further emphasis on human rights.

There is scope for WaterAid Bangladesh to intensify its influence on the school WASH environment. WaterAid Bangladesh and partners can offer their expertise to the Bangladeshi government to help clarify, operationalise and disseminate school WASH policies. Budget advocacy, particularly with regard to the operation and management of school WASH facilities, is another priority. Contributing to sector performance monitoring, notably with regard to budget preparation and utilisation, policy enforcement and monitoring and evaluation, would be extremely valuable. Finally, making school WASH more of a home-grown priority is critical.

Influencing the enabling environment and fostering the emergence of high-level leadership requires leveraging the influence of a wide coalition of partners. New forms of collaborations are needed: i) with organisations already working on school WASH (e.g. Water and Sanitation for the Urban Poor (WSUP), Plan, BRAC) for joint advocacy specifically around school WASH and; ii) with organisations working on other school-related agendas (e.g. health, nutrition, gender, right to education) for broader advocacy work. In addition, WaterAid Bangladesh should explore specific partnership opportunities with the World Food Programme (WFP), Underprivileged Children's Educational Programmes, and the soap industry.

School WASH programmes need to be designed, packaged and sold as initiatives simultaneously promoting a better learning environment whilst strengthening leadership, commitment and accountability amongst school and community stakeholders. Allowing schools to improve at their own pace is a key requisite, which implies reconciling equity principles with the value of merit-based approaches.

The timeframe of school WASH interventions needs to be significantly extended to allow for several learning-by-doing cycles. Integrated WASH-health-nutrition approaches appear extremely relevant. They can attract more donors and mobilise more resources, resulting in more time to build capacities, autonomy and leadership within School Management Committees. Such approaches can prove instrumental in supporting school level and upazila (regional administration) primary education planning.

J-E Tiberghien

1. Background

The state of water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in schools leaves much to be desired. Many schools across the developing world have inadequate facilities (for example too few latrines for the student population, or no handwashing facilities). Some have had a form of service in the past, but this has fallen into disrepair – often for want of very minor expenditure and repairs, such as the replacement of a tap, or adjustment of a rainwater gutter. Many schools have three or four generations of poorly constructed toilets or latrines which have not been cared for, that have filled, collapsed and been abandoned. Random visits to schools in many countries reveal this state of affairs, but to make matters worse, local and national governments often fail to adequately monitor the situation, or to take action on their findings. A situation which, in principle, is easily addressed appears to be dominated by civil society and public sector apathy.

Ensuring that facilities and services are put in place requires an enabling environment consisting of strong and clear policies, effective public planning procedures and adequate budgets. The development of services and facilities requires capacity, expertise and commitment on the part of those undertaking implementation in order to provide high quality and equitable access for all pupils, including those with physical or other disabilities. Sustaining the functioning and performance of services – arguably the most challenging of all aspects – requires management commitment and capacity, dedicated funds, upkeep and maintenance skills and effective supply chains for goods and services.

In view of its long-running concern about the state of school WASH, and against the background of its extensive programmatic and policy work on the topic in many countries, WaterAid took the initiative in 2015 to undertake a programme of research. This commenced with a review of academic and grey literature, together with a set of key informant interviews, which resulted in the report *School WASH research and advocacy programme – work package 1 desk review,* dated 31 July 2015.

The second stage of the research, undertaken in July 2015, involved hiring two independent consultants, who designed a field research programme together with WaterAid research and regional staff. Jacques-Edouard Tiberghien was recruited to undertake four country case studies in south Asia (Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan) and Rose Alabaster to carry out five country case studies in east Africa (Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda).

The third stage of the research led to the completion of nine country case studies in the two regions of WaterAid's country programmes. This document is one of those case studies. Work continues within WaterAid's regional teams and country programmes to summarise, synthesise, learn from and design better programmatic and policy actions based on these reports.

2. WaterAid context

WaterAid's Global Strategy 2015–2020, *Everyone, everywhere 2030,* draws attention to the needless death of 500,000 children annually from diseases caused by a lack of safe water, sanitation and hygiene. It points out the impact on school completion rates of girls whose schools lack adequate toilets. The strategy draws attention to WaterAid's programmatic work delivering improved WASH services to many millions of people; and it refers to the influence of its evidence-based policy and campaigns work in reaching many millions more. WaterAid's global aims – addressing inequality of access, strengthening sustainable services, integrating WASH with other essential areas of sustainable development and improving hygiene behaviour – are highly relevant to a focus on enabling, developing and sustaining WASH services in schools.

The Global Strategy clearly highlights the responsibility of national governments to create environments within which public and private sector entities and civil society can bring about change.

WaterAid looks for effective leadership, active communities, a commitment to equality, the systems necessary for sustainability, and the integration of key development sectors. This report, together with the eight others that accompany it, sets out analysis and evidence highly pertinent to WaterAid's country programmes, regional efforts and Global Strategy. It is hoped too that the material presented here may be of value to other organisations struggling to support national and local governments, communities and schools in their efforts to improve WASH services.

3. Country context

3.1. Geographic and demographic snapshot

With a total area of 147,570 km^2 and a population of 153 million, Bangladesh is the 12th most densely populated country in the world, with 1,050 people per km^2. Nearly 72% of the population live in rural areas.[16] Bangladesh has a long coastline with the Bay of Bengal in the south, borders with India in the east, west and north, and also with Myanmar in the east.

Most of the country is dominated by the fertile Ganges-Brahmaputra delta. The northwest and central parts of the country are formed by the Madhupur and Barind plateaus. The northeast and southeast are home to evergreen hill ranges. The alluvial soil gradually deposited by the rivers on the flood plains of the Ganges-Brahmaputra delta has created some of the most fertile plains in the world.[17] Bangladesh is highly vulnerable to climate change and gets affected by floods, tropical cyclones, tornadoes and tidal bores on an annual basis.

Figure 1: Administrative map of Bangladesh[17]

Arsenic contamination of and salinity in drinking water are critical problems: UNICEF estimates that only 76% of all water points can be considered safe.[18]

3.2. Socio-economic context

Bangladesh's economy recorded an annual growth rate of around 6% in the last decade. The incidence of poverty declined from 48.9% to 31.5% between 2000 and 2010, and per capita income had risen to US$1,044 by 2013. Bangladesh has made significant strides in different indicators of human development, including health and education. With a decreasing dependency of non-working to working age population, Bangladesh will enjoy a 'demographic dividend' if growth of employment and opportunities for quality education and skills development can match the annual increase of working age population at the rate of 3.3%.[19]

Liberal reforms carried out in the early 1990s have boosted the expansion of the private sector, with a rapid shift from agriculture to industry. Numerous conglomerates are now driving the economy and major industries include: textiles, pharmaceuticals, shipbuilding, steel, electronics, energy, construction materials, chemicals, ceramics, food processing and leather goods. Whilst the garment industry still dominates, Bangladesh is also gaining recognition for its vibrant social enterprise sector, including the Nobel Peace Prize-winning Grameen Bank and BRAC, the world's largest non-governmental development agency.[17]

3.3. Administrative and political context

Bangladesh emerged as an independent and sovereign country in 1971. The nation is divided into eight administrative divisions, 64 districts, 487 sub districts (upazilas), 4,550 union parishads, 11 city corporations and 319 municipalities).[16] The country is governed under a parliamentary representative democracy dominated by two parties since democracy was restored in 1990. Concerns over the fairness of elections and annulment of the caretaker government system led to a boycott of the national election in 2014 by the major opposition party alliance. The country continues to face the challenges of unstable politics, corruption, human rights abuses by its security agencies, sporadic demonstrations of religious extremism and inequality.[17]

3.4. WASH

3.4.1. Water resource management and water supply

Despite policy and institutional frameworks developed to properly administer and manage water resources, UN Water notes that the country still faces several challenges, including:
- Inadequate supply of water for agricultural and industrial development while protecting ecosystems, sedimentation and river erosion.
- Seasonal shortage of ground and surface water.
- Water-related natural vulnerabilities and transboundary issues: 90% of total annual runoff originates from sources outside the country's territory.
- Water quality issues related to microbiological and arsenic contamination.
- Efficiency and effectiveness in water administration and management, and institutional issues.
- Access to improved drinking water and basic sanitation.[20]

With regard to the latter challenge, recent estimates from the Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) indicate that 87% of the population has access to improved water sources (see Figure 2). Much progress has thus been achieved, and the country met its Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target.[21]

Figure 2: Estimates for the use of drinking water sources in Bangladesh (JMP 2015)[21]

Year	Population (x 1,000)	% urban population	Use of drinking water sources (percentage of population)									Progress towards MDG target	% of the 2015 population that gained access since 1990
			Urban			Rural			Total				
			Total Improved	Unimproved	Surface water	Total Improved	Unimproved	Surface water	Total Improved	Unimproved	Surface water		
1990	107 386	20	81	17	2	65	28	7	68	26	6	Met target	41
2015	160 411	34	87	13	0	87	13	0	87	13	0		

3.4.2. Sanitation

The government of Bangladesh committed to achieve 100% sanitation by 2013, and the last decade saw the government place significant emphasis on achieving this goal. Progress achieved is outstanding. In the past 25 years, Bangladesh has almost managed to eradicate open defecation, and is the only country in the region where progress has been faster among the poorest people, and the gap reduced.[21]

The Bangladeshi government had the political will to prioritise sanitation at the central and lower tiers as part of the country's poverty reduction strategy, which provided the road map for all levels of government and civil society to take and sustain action on sanitation. Advocacy from central government down to the local governments, led by the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives, with a clear single agenda to shift people from open defecation to fixed point defecation through the construction of low-cost latrines – sometimes shared among two or three families – was the key factor in unifying the country around sanitation. Relying on community-led total sanitation and sanitation marketing approaches, giving a strong role to local government institutions (union parishads and municipalities), and strong collaboration between the government, donors and NGOs all contributed to this success. Bangladesh has become a role model in the field of sanitation. However, significant efforts remain necessary to avoid relapse, to ensure that the population keeps moving up the 'sanitation ladder', and that faecal sludge is properly managed.[16]

Figure 3: Estimates for the use of sanitation facilities in Pakistan (JMP 2015)[21]

Year	Population (x 1,000)	% urban population	Urban				Rural				Total				Progress towards MDGS	% of the 2015 popn that gained access since 1990
				Unimproved				Unimproved				Unimproved				
			Improved	Shared	Other unimproved	Open defecation	Improved	Shared	Other unimproved	Open defecation	Improved	Shared	Other unimproved	Open defecation		
1990	107 386	20	47	24	19	10	31	14	15	40	34	16	16	34	Good progress	38
2015	160 411	34	58	30	12	0	62	28	8	2	61	28	10	1		

3.5. Education

3.5.1. Structure

Since 1990, primary education has been free and compulsory for all children up to grade five. Eighteen million students are enrolled in over 104,000 primary schools and 15,000 secondary schools. The private sector runs about 63% of primary schools and 98% of secondary schools.[6] The education system counts over 366,000 primary school teachers (around 53% of teachers and 23% of headteachers are women).[2]

Education in Bangladesh has three streams: general education, madrasah education and technical vocational education. The two former streams have five stages: pre-primary; primary; secondary; higher secondary and tertiary. The system provides education through both formal and non-formal channels. More than 500 NGOs operate primary education programmes in non-formal education, targeting children from disadvantaged areas or social groups. BRAC has the largest programme with about 740,000 students in schools.[2]

The Ministry of Primary and Mass Education is responsible for formal primary education, under which the Directorate of Primary Education is the line agency responsible for primary education. The Ministry of Education, responsible for secondary and higher education, also looks after madrasah schools. Nationwide operation and management of services is done through six divisions headed by deputy directors, and 64 district offices headed by one district primary education officer, who is supported by assistant upazila education officers (six-seven per upazila). Teacher training is carried out by 55 Primary Training Institutes, guided by the National Academy for Primary Education. Curriculum development is done by the National Curriculum and Textbook Board.[22]

3.5.2. Headways and challenges

The recent review of the education sector by the World Bank recognises the progress achieved by Bangladesh in education: access and equity have been markedly enhanced, gender equity has been attained at the primary and secondary education levels, repetition and dropout rates have declined, and reasonably high levels of completion in primary education achieved. Such results have been reached despite the fact that budget share in education in the country is one of the lowest in south Asia.[3]

Many challenges remain however. About five million children[a] are still out of school, mostly due to poverty. Repetition rates remain high, and transition rates are low across various levels of education. Children living in urban slums suffer from both demand and supply-side limitations to education. Universal education requires targeting the hardest to reach population groups.[3] The challenges for improving the quality of the education system are daunting and multi-faceted. They include low learning levels, inadequate acquisition of non-cognitive skills, inequitable learning among students, a high degree of variation between schools, low teacher motivation, low time on task, weak examination and teacher development systems, limited incentives for performance compared to much fewer disincentives for poor performance, and low levels of accountability in properly using public finance.[3]

Picture 1: End of the school day, fringes of Dhaka.

Box 1: School operations

Students in Bangladesh's government primary schools receive very little contact time and even less classroom instruction time, both in comparison with international norms and with government standards.[i] Secondary schools operate in single shifts and most primaries in double shifts. This double shift pattern (grades 1 and 2 in the morning, grades 3 to 5 in the afternoon) was introduced during the 1990s as the Government, '"moved aggressively to achieve its education for all target: 90% of government primary schools moved to double shift with only 22.5 hours instructional time per week compared to 38.5 hours per week."[ii]

[i] USAID (2004) Bangladesh educational assessment time to learn: teachers' and students' use of time in government primary schools In Bangladesh BEPS Activity
[ii] UNESCO (2008) Double shift schooling: design and operation for cost-effectiveness

---

3.6. Health and nutrition

Bangladesh has achieved remarkable progress in overall health outcomes,[1] and the nationwide sanitation breakthrough of the past decade has significantly contributed towards improving public health – especially the health of children. Between 1990 and 2015, the child mortality rate has reduced from 133 per 1,000 live births to 38 per 1,000. Infant mortality and neonatal mortality rates were also halved.[16] Several major challenges remain

---

[a] 3.3 million out of 20 million children of primary school age remain out of school, according to WFP (2015).

to be addressed in the health system including: a lack of effective Ministry of Local Government/MoHFP[b] coordination for the implementation of primary healthcare services; a critical shortage of trained health providers with the right skill mix in the public sector; and a chronically low budget allocation to the sector despite claims of the government to achieve universal health coverage. [16]

Achievements have been far less significant in the area of nutrition. Despite impressive results associated with vitamin A supplements (which has contributed to lower child mortality), salt iodisation (which has helped reduce goitre rates), and iron supplementation, malnutrition remains high: 39% of children under five years of age are stunted, 35% are underweight. According to WHO classification, there is 'very high prevalence' of underweight in Bangladesh, with a rate that is higher than most sub-Saharan African countries. This issue is not only affecting poor people: in 2013, 24% of children under five who were underweight were in the richest quintile.[1]

The government's school feeding programme, launched in 2011, reached 1.4 million children in 2012 – and is projected to support three million students (out of a total of 18 million) from 2015 onwards. WFP works with the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education to provide biscuits fortified with vitamins and minerals to pre-primary and primary school children in high poverty areas. This acts as an additional incentive for parents to keep children in school. The programme includes a learning package for children, parents and other community members on vegetable gardening, health, nutrition and hygiene. WFP's coverage is decreasing and currently focuses on supporting half a million schoolchildren in food insecure and poverty prone areas. In 2013, WFP started working with communities in

---

Box 2: Nutrition: hygiene remains the weakest link

The undernutrition problem has primarily been dealt with through health sector interventions, which have successfully increased nutrition-related knowledge and attitudes, but have had limited impact on nutritional outcomes. The causes of undernutrition are multifactorial and call for both 'nutrition-specific' as well as 'nutrition-sensitive' actions from multiple sectors, not just health. Improved WASH interventions are necessary for reducing undernutrition, but not sufficient to create a dent in the undernutrition problem. Adequacy of food, health care and WASH are all critical for reducing undernutrition. Progress has been made in coverage of water and sanitation facilities, but not in hygiene promotion. The qualities of water and sanitation facilities also need improvements […] Reducing open defecation cannot be considered as 'mission accomplished' […] Hygiene remains the weakest link.

World Bank (2015) Water, sanitation, hygiene and nutrition in Bangladesh.

Bamna, Barguna district, and Islampur, Jamalpur district, to provide meals instead of biscuits.[a]

---

[b] At Upazila Health Complexes (UHCs), the World Bank has reported that 40% of doctors are regularly absent and at the smaller Union Health and Family Welfare Centres (UHFWCs) the sole doctor is absent 74% of the time. SIDA (2014).

4. Research aims and objectives

The aim of the research is to **set out a systematic process by which WaterAid can design and improve its strategies and approaches for school WASH.** The objectives of the research are as follows:

1. Review and deepen existing school WASH bottleneck analyses, or in the case of countries with no such analysis undertake them. Focus on detailed descriptions of the bottleneck analysis components and explanation of underlying causes of strengths and weaknesses. Explicitly include a review of country monitoring system and indicators.
2. Analyse WaterAid country programme activities, and as far as possible the work of other organisations, and the extent to which they address school WASH needs and weaknesses.
3. In the course of the work, highlight examples of good practice and promising innovations. Also identify unsuccessful approaches that should be avoided in the interventions of WaterAid and/or other organisations.
4. Recommend modifications to existing WaterAid school WASH strategies and approaches, based on the analysis undertaken and clearly articulated reasoning harmonised across the two study regions.
5. Recommend ways of strengthening the existing bottleneck analysis tool and make other recommendations relevant to the work.

5. Methodology

5.1. Analytical framework

A generic analytical framework has been prepared by Rose Alabaster, Richard Carter and Jacques-Edouard Tiberghien to guide the process of data collection (documentation review, interviews, workshops, observations), and analysis. It largely builds upon UNICEF's school WASH bottleneck analysis tool, which aims to support system-level discussions and planning to improve the effectiveness of WASH interventions in schools in low-income countries. This tool consists of three components (enabling, developing and sustaining), nine subcomponents[c] and 27 factors, and is typically used to help identify and prioritise barriers to scalable, equitable and sustainable school WASH services.[23] The analytical framework developed is conveniently split into two components:

1. Component A: a table comprising sets of themes and questions to gain an in-depth understanding of bottlenecks in the school WASH sector at national level. Factors underlying the school WASH bottleneck analysis tool.

2. Component B: allows an assessment of the relevance and effectiveness of the strategy and approach of WaterAid (and other INGOs and donors), both from the perspective of the bottlenecks identified through Component A and from the perspective of key generic criteria.

During the document review, the information was coded against the different themes of each component. Meetings and workshops were preceded by a careful examination of the

---

[c] Enabling (Policy, Planning, Budget); Developing (Access, Equity, Capacity); Sustaining (O&M inputs, Maintenance, Use)

most relevant themes to address and specific issues to discuss. The nature of the informant determined the relevance of the various issues listed under Component A and/or B. The analytical framework was circulated to WaterAid Bangladesh several weeks prior to the visit. The framework was found to be appropriate in its generic form and did not require modifications.

5.2. Data collection and analysis

The research was undertaken through a combination of document review, key informant and group interviews, stakeholder workshops and school visits. In order to embrace research-into-use principles, special emphasis was put on designing the research protocol and conducting the data collection and analysis jointly with WaterAid Bangladesh. The research process was shared early on with the country programme team to ensure the framework could be adapted to the country context as needed. A feedback meeting organised on the last day of the visit with WaterAid Bangladesh staff allowed discussion of the findings and their implications in terms of avenues to improve school WASH programming.

Likewise, attention was paid to engaging national and district level school WASH stakeholders throughout the research process. The one-to-one meetings and district level workshop organised in Gaibandha were seized on as opportunities to clearly explain to stakeholders the rationale for the research, and stress its relevance for the whole school WASH sub-sector, beyond WaterAid Bangladesh. By stressing the need to build on existing tools (school WASH bottleneck analysis tool) and experience and tap into the collective wisdom available locally, stakeholders were encouraged to share their insights and suggestions.

The data collected through the literature review and interviews was coded against the components and sub-components of the expanded school WASH bottleneck analysis tool. The analytical framework comprises a large number of questions and associated lines of enquiry supporting the exploration of potential accountability and political economy issues affecting each factor/theme. Only a few themes were addressed with each informant. The preparation of each meeting and site visit thus involved the selection of a set of key relevant questions. Given the variety of informants to meet and the need to keep the evaluation responsive to important issues as they arise (calling for exploration at greater depth), such questionnaires' – sets of questions guiding the semi-structured conversations held with stakeholders – were prepared in-country prior to the meetings.

5.3. Process

The preparation phase saw the author review the documentation, collate the relevant information in a bespoke table (as described in section 5.2.3), and design a tentative schedule for the country visit with the two focal people at WaterAid Bangladesh. An inception report combining a draft desk report and the research protocol was prepared and shared with the team leader, WaterAid Bangladesh and WaterAid UK.
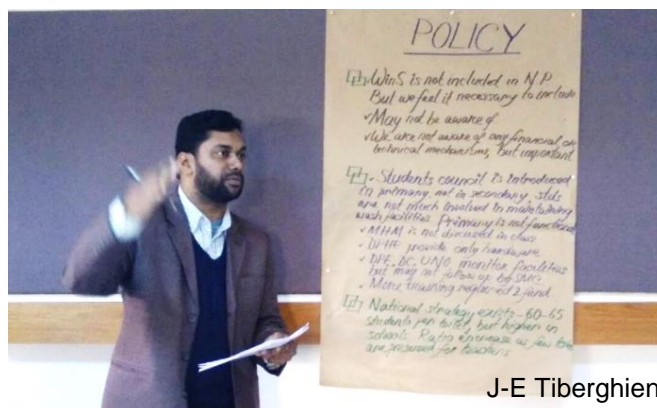
The schedule of the ten-day country visit is presented in Annex B. It included interviews with national and local-level stakeholders, visits to rural and urban schools, and a district-level workshop. Preliminary findings and overarching recommendations were presented

Picture 2: Workshop in Gaibandha.

J-E Tiberghien

J-E Tiberghien

J-E Tiberghien

J-E Tiberghien

5.4. Limitations

For security reasons and otherwise, WaterAid Bangladesh favoured a compact schedule, fitting the planned activities within a short ten-day trip. Whilst the significant amount of time spent in transport during the rest of the visit shortened the duration of exchanges with stakeholders during school visits, the participation of the WaterAid UK regional support officer helped overcome this constraint as the research team was able to split when required. Additional meetings with representatives from the local government and ministries of education at district level would have been helpful.

Building on the learning from country visits conducted in Nepal, India and Pakistan, the agenda and facilitation of the one-day workshop in Gaibandha were optimised. The output of the day was rich, enhanced by a productive debriefing session with WaterAid Bangladesh's director of fundraising and organisational learning.

Time constraints and security considerations led the research team to focus on school WASH activities carried out by WaterAid Bangladesh and their partners in two areas of intervention (Dhaka and Gaibandha, in the northern part of the country). The range of schools visited (rural, urban, primary, secondary) and the diversity of their exposure to WaterAid activities (i.e. no exposure, ongoing intervention, long phased-out project, ongoing rights-based approach community WASH), were a source of much learning.

5.5. Recommendations for the use of the school WASH bottleneck analysis tool

This research in Bangladesh further confirmed the relevance of school WASH analysis framed around the enhanced school WASH bottleneck analysis tool. Exploring underlying political economy and accountability drivers to school WASH bottlenecks generated great interest from most informants, whether in the context of one-to-one meetings, focus group discussions or workshops.

As discussed with stakeholders during the country visit, leadership is not explicitly addressed in the school WASH bottleneck analysis tool. The policy subcomponent of the enabling environment component questions the existence of a lead agency (or working group) on school WASH. The analytical framework used in this project (enhanced with enquiries into political economy and accountability issues), explores the notion of leadership a bit further by questioning the effectiveness of this leadership. But overall, the Bangladesh case study further confirms that attention paid to school WASH leadership, from the grassroots to the top level, is wholly insufficient given its importance in the outcomes and sustainability of school WASH interventions.

A good understanding of leadership issues would benefit school WASH programming. WASH and school WASH programming have long recognised the importance of working on the one hand at the level of values, meanings and leadership (e.g. empowerment through awareness-raising and capacity building, building trust and propagating leadership through exposure visits), and on the other hand at the level of institutional systems and practices to ensure the replication and scaling up of minimum standards. What has been missing so far, arguably, is a clear recognition of the hierarchical relationships (what informs what) between these components and the relative leverage for lasting change available at each level. Values, meanings and intentions are all un-manifest realities (i.e. they are not directly tangible), as opposed to institutional systems and behaviours.

WaterAid

6. Findings

6.1. Enabling

6.1.1. Policies

a) Policy documents

Policies

The Bangladeshi legal framework comprises a number of policies more or less directly relevant to school WASH, including:

- **Rights policies –** Rights to water and sanitation are not yet legislated, but by recognising the UN declaration of sanitation as a 'human right', and the South Asia Conference on Sanitation (SACOSAN) declarations of sanitation and safe drinking water as 'a basic right', the Government of Bangladesh has taken steps to minimise the gaps in equity and rights in WASH.[16]
- **Education policies –** The Compulsory Primary Education Act of 1990 empowers the Bangladesh Government to undertake legal and administrative measures to implement compulsory primary education. Additionally, the Education for All National Plan of Action I and II: NPA II (2003-2015) was prepared to ensure that every young person and adult receives quality basic education and meets their learning needs in a competitive world.[19]
- **WASH policies –** The Water Act 2013, which provides a legal framework for the sector, and the different Local Government Acts 2009 for the City Corporations, Municipalities, Upazila and Union Parishads.
- **School WASH policies –** In June 2015 the Ministry of Education issued a Circular to improve WASH conditions in secondary and higher secondary schools, madrassa and technical and vocational institutions. This Circular, which put an emphasis on school WASH operation and maintenance, MHM and access for children with disabilities, is enforceable (see Box 3).
- **Miscellaneous –** National Children Policy 2011, and Disabled Persons Rights and Protection Act 2013.

Plans

School WASH is also reflected in national plans, part of the WASH effort described in the **Perspective Plan (2010–21)** and referred to very specifically in the recent **Five-Year Country Plan (2016-2020)**. The Ministry of Primary and Mass Education highlighted in this recent document the need to provide inclusive and separate toilets for girls equipped with disposal facilities for sanitary napkins and cleansing materials.

The **Sector Development Plan 2011-25** for the water and sanitation sector prepared by the Ministry of Local Government stresses the many benefits of school WASH and lists the key principles and desired features of such interventions,[d] building on the rich experience of

---

[d] a) To design and construct child-friendly, gender-sensitive, good quality and sustainable facilities in schools for sanitation, handwashing, water supply, compound fencing and solid waste collection; b) To develop adequate knowledge, attitudes and skills on hygiene through life-skills based hygiene education and child participation; c) To incorporate parents and the community as target groups; d) To develop a planning process and management model that addresses national, local and school/community levels; e) To create political

over two decades of school WASH programming in Bangladesh.[24] As part of the preparation of this Plan, comprehensive draft National School WASH Standards were developed in 2009 by the policy support unit of the local government division.[25]

Box 3: Ministry of Education Circular on school WASH (June 2015)

The task of keeping the toilet clean has to be taken under the supervision of the managing committee of each educational institution, who will preserve a specific allocation for this and appoint the necessary manpower to keep the toilet clean. Teachers have to lead the way in keeping the toilet clean. Committees can be formed with members of scouts and girl guides. Headteachers will appoint students in groups for taking turns through the year to keep the toilets clean.

Adequate lighting and air circulation in toilets. Gender friendly sanitation has to be ensured. All educational institutions have to establish separate toilets for the female students and plastic bins with lids are compulsory in the toilets. Suitable toilets for disabled children have to be built. Female teachers have to discuss MHM with the girl students. The managing committee has to take initiative in providing sanitary napkins (on payment if needed) to the girl student.

When district and upazila level education officers, school inspectors, officers from local government and higher authorities visit schools, WASH-related information needs to be included in reports. Cleanliness-related information to be available on website of schools. District admin will encourage the local health complex (government and otherwise) to inspect schools at least twice a year. This order will take effect immediately 23/06/2015.

Strategies

There is no specific strategy for school WASH thus far but references to it are found in several national strategies such as:

- The **draft WASH Strategy (2014**), which delineates the roles and responsibilities of various ministries, including the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education.
- The **WASH Strategy (2011)**, which recommends inter-sectoral efforts to target communities and schools but focuses on primary schools only. [6]
- The **Hygiene Promotion Strategy (2012)**, which requires working with the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education and the Ministry of Education for promotion of hygiene and sanitation practices in schools.

b) Policy implementation

Dissemination of school WASH policies has been lacking, as epitomised by the difficulty for the public to access the National School WASH Standards, and judging by the low level of awareness of most informants consulted on recent policy developments. Clear guidelines for the operationalisation of the existing policies have been lacking.[4] Translating policies into action remains a challenge, as witnessed in the broader WASH sector: enforcing the establishment of WASH brigades in all schools proves difficult due to the lack of manpower, explains a senior official.

---

ownership to allow for a demand-responsive approach, scaling up and effective long-term interventions; and joint efforts and partnerships with government and nongovernmental partners dealing with school health/hygiene or other efforts to build child-friendly schools.

Interesting progress is noted, however, notably in the Government-led PEDP programme, which focuses on quality education, institutional capacity building and structural reforms. As a partner of the Government in this programme, UNICEF has advocated for greater attention to be paid to school WASH. The third iteration of the programme (PEDP-III 2011-2016)[e] puts extra emphasis on school WASH, notably through building WASH facilities in primary schools across the country. PEDP-III allows for the progressive application of standards throughout the country and the elaboration of planning tools and systems to address operation and maintenance challenges. Whilst UNICEF primarily supported WASH in primary schools, they have recently partnered with the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education to implement a programme targeting 1,000 secondary schools.

These ongoing programmes are complemented by other initiatives led by the Government or other development partners. Between 2007 and 2013, the Sanitation, Hygiene Education and Water in Bangladesh project (SHEWA-B),[f] a DFID-UNICEF and Government-funded programme, targeted 9,187 primary and 650 secondary schools in rural and urban areas. Between 2012 and 2014, UNICEF and the Dutch Embassy partnered to conduct school WASH interventions in 500 primary and secondary schools in difficult and hard to reach areas of seven districts. The initiative built on SHEWA-B outreach activities, and scaled up school-led total sanitation to achieve sustainable hygiene behaviour in schools and communities. It involved comprehensive capacity building of teachers, masons and School Management Committees on construction of WASH facilities.[6] Save the Children, Plan International, WaterAid, WSUP and many other NGOs are also implementing school WASH programmes using relatively standard 'hardware plus software' integrated approaches based on UNICEF guidance material. BRAC, the largest NGO in Bangladesh, is implementing a WASH programme in around 5,000 schools in 245 sub-districts, with a focus on secondary schools.

c) Leadership, coordination, roles and responsibilities

Institutional framework

The Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives has historically been the lead agency for school WASH (local and city councils, and municipalities have the authority to implement school WASH work), although both the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education and the Ministry of Education, in charge of secondary education, are playing a central role too.

The Ministry of Local Government includes both the Local Government Engineering Department, and the Department of Public Health Engineering. The former is responsible for the delivery of community water supply and sanitation and all government schools pertaining to communities, and was logically entrusted with the responsibility of building school WASH facilities – tube wells and wash blocks – throughout the country. This situation prevailed for many years, and the department delivered school WASH infrastructures during PEDP-I (2000-2005) and PEPD-II (2006-2010). Irregularities (quality

---

[e] The Department of Primary Education is implementing the programme under the supervision of the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education. The total budget is US$8.3 billion, 85% of which comes from the revenue budget. The donor consortium consists of the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, UNICEF, JICA, CIDA, SIDA, EU, AUSAID and DFID
[f] SHEWA-B: Sanitation, Hygiene Education and Water in Bangladesh

of works, quality of reporting) led the Government and donor agencies preparing PEDP-III (2011-15) to require the replacement of the Local Government Engineering Department with the Department of Public Health Engineering to implement the hardware component of the school WASH programme.

On the education front, fragmentation in the Bangladeshi education landscape is significant. Five separate authorities manage 34 types of primary schools. This institutional fragmentation has affected consensus building around school WASH.[4] The Government's decision in 2013 to nationalise all schools is paving the way for some standardisation and greater Governmental control on the quality of learning environments, including WASH.

Roles and responsibilities

The distribution of roles and responsibilities regarding the hardware part of school WASH work is relatively well defined: the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education is in charge of around 65,000 schools, but does not have an engineering department. As a result, it entirely relies on the Department of Public Health Engineering (for WASH facilities) and the Local Government Engineering Department (for all other works). In contrast, the Ministry of Education has its own engineering department, which implements the hardware component of WASH work in its 10,000 schools, with technical support from the Department of Public Health Engineering.

As for the software part of school WASH programming, the National Hygiene Promotion Strategy for the water supply and sanitation sector delineates roles for each institution:

- Through the Directorate of Primary Education, the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education delivers hygiene education in primary schools and ensures hygienic practices in schools, incorporating hygiene practices in the curriculum at different levels and highlighting the importance of running water in latrines to maintain hygiene.
- The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Ministry of Education[g] are to promote hygiene in general.
- The National Forum for Water Supply and Sanitation under the Local Government Engineering Department coordinates, provides guidance and allocates resources for hygiene promotion activities at the national level. It monitors progress through upazila water and sanitation (WATSAN) committees in rural areas and ward WATSAN committees in urban areas.
- The Ministry of Information is responsible for spreading hygiene-related messages through mass media campaigns and electronic and print media.[16]

---

[g] Official documents appear to put less emphasis on the WASH-related roles of the Ministry of Education, generally drawing more attention to the central role of the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education. This study did not investigate the reasons for this and possible implications, notably in terms of accountability. This focus on the latter Ministry's role may result from the prominence of primary education in the country and/or the focus of development partners on primary schools. Further research is needed on this point

Coordination

A recent study by the World Bank notes a persistent difficulty in the WASH sector in translating policies and strategies into action, partly due to the inter-ministerial coordination required and partly due to insufficient incentives for individual ministries to work beyond their own domain.[1] The same syndrome appears to affect the school WASH subsector. In his recent assessment of school WASH programmes, Gawade (2014) notes the duplication of efforts between the PEDP-III and SHEWA-B programmes, and summons national forums such as the Disparity Working Group set up under PEDP-III to address programme overlaps and sustainability issues. The assessment also calls for integrated planning and effective inter-sectoral collaborations at the national level amongst the Directorate of Primary Education, the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, the Department for Public Health Engineering and other partners such as UNICEF.[1]

> **Box 4: Networking under the Campaign for Popular Education**
>
> The Campaign for Popular Education is an advocacy and campaign network of more than 1,300 NGOs, researchers, educators and other civil society organisations and individuals working towards the achievement of education for all goals through policy advocacy, networking, campaign, research and capacity building of its members and partner organisations. In the view of several senior education officials, the Campaign for Popular Education is an influential stakeholder with very good connections at the top level of the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education and the Ministry of Education, but WASH is likely to represent a very marginal issue. School WASH is likely to rise on the agenda of the Campaign for Popular Education if bundled in a joint WASH-health-nutrition-gender agenda recognising the strengthening of school governance as a priority objective.

Conversations held with several informants suggest some improvement on these issues. Under PEDP-III, the regular joint planning sessions between the Directorate of Primary Education, the Department for Public Health Engineering and the National Curriculum and Textbook Board [h] – the contracting agencies working under the umbrella of the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education – seem to facilitate coordination. Also, Alam Monirul notes that the sector-wide approach in primary education fosters management and coordination, but that its bureaucracy prevents embracing diversity and novel ideas.[14]

The call for greater convergence between WASH, health and nutrition, echoed and amplified during SACOSAN VI[16] – which implies better coordination between representatives of education and health ministries at community level – has been heard by many organisations, public or not, which are already busy developing practical strategies to that effect. The Department of Secondary and Higher Education and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare recently formalised an agreement manifesting a joint awareness of the mutual benefit in joining forces on hygiene education. The agreement ensures that health assistants and family planning assistants active at union level shall pay monthly visits to schools, to advise students and teachers alike. A representative of UNICEF confirmed the steps taken by his organisation towards a systematic integration of sectoral interventions. As for WaterAid Bangladesh, it has enshrined the principle of WASH-health-nutrition

---

[h] The National Curriculum and Textbook Board is the apex body for developing and revising the curriculum for pre-primary, primary, secondary and higher secondary levels, as well as developing and refining textbooks and other learning materials based on the national curriculum

integration in its new country strategy.

Despite the large number of governmental and non-governmental organisations involved in school WASH, there is no platform at national and district level for networking, joint advocacy or programme coordination. Gawade (2014) signalled the relevance of such forums at the district level. Several informants concurred that whilst many NGOs are active on school WASH, they have not yet built the habit of sharing information and rather tend to do their own thing. The Campaign for Popular Education may be the right umbrella organisation to host such a forum.

Leadership

In a society that has remained very centralised despite the decentralisation process, top-down decision-making processes still prevail, and leadership remains largely down to the individual. The example of the remarkable progress achieved nationwide on eradicating open defecation is illustrative: this success was made possible by the personal and strong engagement of the prime minister at the time. High-level political will triggered a powerful momentum that has unfortunately been lost since the last elections, where the opposition dislodged the ruling party. Placed as a national priority a few years ago, sanitation seems to have vanished from the political agenda. Members of the WaterAid Bangladesh team concur that leadership never really permeated within the system nor resulted in a significant shift in mind-set.

Likewise, despite the pride of certain senior officials in the high level of standards and quality of toilet blocks built by the Government (in comparison to the design of school toilets by the Government of India), school WASH remains very much a donor-driven agenda, channelled through PEDP-III and strongly supported by UNICEF. Leadership is currently lacking and highly depends on the presence of high-level school WASH champions, as awareness of the importance of school WASH has not yet spread through the local government and education systems.

A senior official of the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education confirms that the development of school WASH is more limited by a lack of political will at top level than by resource constraints. He adds that the civil servant who would have sufficient expertise to draft a concept note for a school WASH programme – and the clout to put it on the table in front of key decision-makers – lacks the time to work on what is considered an extra agenda. Once submitted to decision-makers, the proposal would compete with other projects that benefit from more support. Advocacy work to create buy-in needs to come first, he suggests, highlighting the effectiveness of WaterAid Bangladesh's advocacy work on hygiene. In the medium to long term, school WASH will rise through the political agenda anyway, lifted by its increased visibility in the new Sustainable Development Goals.

Although this study stresses the importance of high-level school WASH champions, it also suggests the means to stimulate leadership at the intermediate and local levels. The head of the WASH programme at BRAC stressed the benefits of working at scale to gain political influence and draw the attention of high-level policy makers: "Scale up is necessary, we are working in 250 upazilas (sub-districts) [50% of the country], local MPs are raising their voices and becoming our ambassadors: they have seen this and this happen from grassroots to commissioners. MPs are demanding more of these school WASH facilities."

Box 5: Key requirements in school WASH Standards[36]

- The distance between the nearest latrines and tube wells should be at least 10m.
- A reliable water point must be available and easily accessible. Staff toilets and schoolchildren's toilets should be located next to handwashing points that have adequate drainage. There should be provision of a safe water point for each 100 students and five litres per student per day in day schools.
- Sufficient toilets or urinals must be available: one per 50 children and one for each ten female staff and one for each ten male staff. 60% of the total amount of facilities can be urinals for boys.
- Toilets must be easily accessible to all, including staff and children with disabilities – and located at no more than 50m from all users. When possible, male and female toilets shall be completely separated.
- Toilets are child-friendly, socio-cultural appropriate, age and gender appropriate, provide MHM facilities such as rag cleaning, drying or disposing facilities, and are accessible for children with disabilities or suffering from chronic diseases.
- Toilets are hygienic to use and easy to clean.
- A cleaning and maintenance routine is in operation and ensures that clean and functioning toilets are available at all school hours.

---

d) Standards

Formulation of standards

The development of the National Standards of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for Schools in Bangladesh started in 2009. Building on WHO/UNICEF guidelines on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Standards for Schools in Low-cost Settings,[26] the participatory work was supported by UNICEF and involved working groups under the Directorate of Primary Education and the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education. It also allowed inputs from a wide range of governmental agencies and non-governmental partners. The Ministry of Primary and Mass Education approved the Standards in 2011 and released them in 2012.

The National Standards are meant to:
- Assess the situation in existing schools, to evaluate the extent to which those schools may fall short of the minimum standards.
- Set specific targets at local level.
- Plan and carry out any improvement required.
- Ensure that the construction of new schools meets acceptable quality standards.
- Prepare and implement comprehensive and realistic action plans so that acceptable conditions are maintained.[27]

The Standards deal specifically with hygiene promotion, control of vector-borne diseases, cleaning and waste disposal, food storage and preparation, water supply (quality, quantity and access) and sanitation (quality, quantity and access).
The Standards recommend the use of appropriate facilities for MHM for female teachers and adolescent girls, stipulate the formation of student brigades at school and cluster level (12-15 clusters per school catchment area), and require each school to establish one hygiene corner to display information, education and communication materials and facilitate teacher-to-student and child-to-child hygiene promotion. School Management Committees and Parent Teacher Associations are designated responsible for monitoring hygiene sessions and ensuring the sustainable use of school WASH facilities, including their day-to-day and periodic maintenance. As noted by practitioners participating in UNICEF's 2014 Learning from the Field sessions, the Standards failed to provide concrete guidance for School Management Committees and Parent Teacher Associations and minimum requirements for cleanliness and maintenance.[4]

Standards evolution

The Standards are being adjusted during PEDP-III: owing to funding and space constraints, the toilet-to-student ratio was relaxed to 1:50 for girls and 1:75 for boys. Furthermore, it was considered that teachers would use the same toilets as students to ensure their cleanliness.[6] Toilet design has been enhanced, and each school is now required to have separate WASH blocks for boys and girls. Each block comprises three toilets, two urinals and hand and foot wash facilities. Handrails for children with disabilities are included.

As in many other countries, UNICEF is aiming to foster a review of the Standards and the incorporation of the Three Star Approach, currently piloted under PEDP-III in 580 schools across the country.

Enforcement of Standards

In 2014, UNICEF indicated that school representatives, including education officers, teachers and School Management Committees were to be trained on the Standards once they were finalised and published, but noted that due to unresolved technical issues their publication and dissemination had been postponed.[6]

At the time of this research, the Standards could not be found online. Over four years after their official approval by the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, it remains difficult for school WASH practitioners to refer to the Standards when planning or implementing interventions.

Practitioners participating in the UNICEF-led learning exercise also stressed the absence of government directives enforcing the Standards. The Ministry of Education Circular issued in June 2015 (see Box 3), which applies to secondary education, higher secondary schools, madrasha and technical and vocational institutions, is enforceable and meant to take immediate effect. Although it addresses a wide range of key school WASH requirements, it fails to refer to the National Standards developed to that effect.

As noted above, significant irregularities have been noted in the past regarding the quality of school WASH work. Gawade (2014) deplored the frequent poor finish of toilets in the SHEWA-B programme, stressing the need for proper construction supervision. Research by Chatterley et al (2014) also points out the frequent poor construction of toilets related to under-performing contractors.[15] The superintendent of PEDP-III at the Department for Public Health Engineering, the agency now in charge of building WASH facilities for the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education in primary schools, expresses his confidence regarding the application of quality standards, notably thanks to increased transparency in the electronic tender procurement process leading to the selection of contractors.

As for secondary schools, the Department of Secondary and Higher Education has hired an engineering consultancy firm to oversee the quality of works and compliance with quality standards. A memorandum of understanding has been signed, whereby the Department has to redress quality issues within 72 hours during a guarantee period of two years. This guarantee can be activated by members of School Management Committees, Parent Teacher Associations and assistant education officers though a complaint mechanism (dedicated telephone number) that alerts the Department of Secondary and Higher Education.[i]

6.1.2. Planning

a) Targets

UNICEF notes the absence of a National Plan of Action specific to school WASH. Alternative plans exist, such as the Sector Development Plan 2011-2025 for the broader water supply and sanitation sector, but they do not include specific targets for school WASH.

The PEDP-III programme, however, has specific school WASH objectives: the initial target was for at least 80% of government primary schools to have separate toilets for girls by the end of the programme.[28] Conversations with officials suggest that an upwardly revised objective is to cover all government primary schools with WASH facilities by the end of the programme in Dec 2017. The targets mentioned on the revised programme document are the following: 95% of schools with at least one functioning toilet, 95% of schools with separate functioning toilets for girls, 95% of schools with safe water sources.[29]

---

[i] It was not within the remit of this research to verify the extent to which this complaint mechanism is used nor its effectiveness

b) Planning process

PEDP-III school WASH planning

Sector experts have underscored several shortcomings in the planning process of the programme. First of all, PEDP-III is based on outdated data, and focuses merely on the construction of school WASH facilities with little provision made for the rehabilitation of existing facilities, hygiene promotion or the mobilisation of demand or training.[13] Gawade (2014) also notes deficiencies in the targeting process, resulting in a duplication of efforts regarding the provision of water points and toilet blocks between PEDP-III and SHEWA-B, and the exclusion of needy schools due to a lack of available space. The absence of joint field assessments by the Directorate of Primary Education and the Department for Public Health Engineering officials to back-up planning is stressed, as is the lack of scope for district officials to adjust central level plans to ensure they are relevant to site conditions.[6]

According to the superintendent of PEDP-III sitting in the Department for Public Health Engineering, the planning process is gaining in effectiveness and transparency. The Primary Education Property Management Information System (PEPMIS), planning software jointly developed with development partners, will be made accessible online from March 2016, allowing the public to better track how planning responds to needs on the ground. The Department for Public Health Engineering, the Directorate of Primary Education, and Local Government Engineering Department all input into the PEPMIS and it is validated by district and sub-district education officials, which reflects the status of several key indicators against government standards.

According to the superintendent of PEPD-III, data disaggregated by union and school, and in the process of being systematically geo-referenced, is reliable at 95%. The database is used to prioritise school WASH and key selection criteria including the total number of students, the condition of infrastructure and the student/toilet ratio (and in particular the female student/toilet ratio). Every school needs to be equipped with a running water supply system, which the Department for Public Health Engineering installs prior to the construction of any WASH block.

Box 6: Government priorities

The lack unified national plans and targets for school WASH encompassing all educational institutions under both ministries reflects current priorities of the Government. Participants of the workshop noted that major improvement had been achieved nationwide on sanitation: open defecation is almost eradicated. They stress that despite the comparatively lower progress achieved during the same period on institutional WASH, including schools, the thrust around sanitation has considerably declined. Furthermore, school sanitation is regarded as a matter pertaining for the ministries of education, whose main priority during the past decade has revolved around boosting enrolment, and notably girls' enrolment. Stipends and the delivery of school feeding programmes have allowed remarkable progress on enrolment. The top priorities are now about boosting academic performance, the attendance of teachers and students.

"We are a juncture where the Government realises the need to shift from feeding the belly to feeding the mind", explained a senior manager of the UN World Food Programme, and school WASH needs to be addressed as part of the improvements to learning environment required for quality education.

Overarching observations on the planning process

PEPMIS may bring a much-awaited breakthrough in the planning processes at play in primary education – and in the education system more broadly. The evaluation of the Netherlands' support to primary education in Bangladesh referred to research findings from 2009 indicating that planning and budgeting practices prevented an efficient and equitable allocation of public resources for education. The lack of transparent, clear and realistic formulae or rules determining public education expenditures were found to favour intense lobbying, elite capture and elite bias. Also, incremental budgeting – allocating resources on the basis of the past year's allocation (plus some adjustments) – was highlighted as a historical practice favouring the status quo and resulting in weak links between sector objectives and budgets.[7]

The ineffective practices described by most informants contrasts with the encouraging description of the PEDP-III planning process assisted by PEPMIS. Headteachers and education officials consulted suggest that the school WASH-related information they register on forms (e.g. ISAS form, APSC) that are circulated upwards in the system are actually rarely taken into account. A senior representative of WaterAid Bangladesh notes that donor-driven programmes foster transparency in the planning process and ensure that it responds to a real assessment of needs, otherwise normal planning practices prevail, which applies to school WASH, WASH or any other sector in the country: officials are consulted for local needs and sub-district officials prepare their plan, which is not taken on board. The level of planning skills at the sub-district level is highly insufficient, and only a minority of sub-district officials seem to have a good understanding of plan preparation and budget making.[30]

Exchanges during the workshop in Gaibandha highlight the significance of political interference in the planning process, which leads to reallocating resources to preferred areas and schools. This can affect up to 80-90% of the planning resulting from the bottom-up process, as estimated by the participants of the workshop, who concur that the planning is a result of essentially a top-down process. In the view of a senior manager of WaterAid Bangladesh, a key bottleneck is that local government authorities, which are meant to play a significant role in planning, are not supported by the state: "the Government doesn't want local government structure to be strong".

The application of the Right to Information Act and the increasing access of the population to transparent needs assessment, planning and budget allocation processes will hopefully help gradually address these deep-rooted patterns.

c) Monitoring

Monitoring tools and processes

Data on availability and use of school WASH facilities are tracked by the Directorate of Primary Education and the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, through the Annual Primary School Census and the Institutional Self-Assessment Summary respectively. Gawade (2014) notes that the self-reporting nature of both these assessments raises concerns over the robustness of the information collected, and observes that the range of indicators used by the Directorate of Primary Education is insufficient to provide a

www.wateraid.org/ppa   wateraid@wateraid.org

WaterAid is a registered charity: Australia: ABN 99 700 687 141. Canada: 119288934 RR0001. India: U85100DL2010NPL200169. Sweden: Org.nr: 802426-1268, PG: 90 01 62-9, BG: 900-1629. UK: 288701 (England and Wales) and SC039479 (Scotland). US: WaterAid America is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization

28

comprehensive picture of adequacy, coverage and usage of WASH facilities in primary schools.[6]

School WASH practitioners participating in a UNICEF Learning from the Field joint exercise concurred with this. They highlighted that the Annual Census, which does not register access to soap, student to toilet ratios, or cleanliness and functionality, consequently fails to shed light on the condition and usage of school WASH facilities. The perceived importance of proper operation and maintenance of such facilities is lowered as a result.[4]

Meetings held with the Department for Public Health Engineering and UNICEF informants suggest that data collected through the Annual Census at the level of primary schools is quite robust and supports planning effectively. The upcoming integration of Geographic Information System (GIS) functionalities in the PEPMIS might facilitate the updating of information in the system.

In secondary schools, the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education introduced a specific assessment form for WASH issues, where information related to soap availability, water availability, running water, toilet cleanliness and usability needs to be reported. This form, under the memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education, is supposed to be filled in by a health worker, and left in the school for later collection by education officers, tasked to report the findings and mention any gaps against standard.

> **Box 7: Decentralising education and promoting bottom-up planning**
>
> PED-II envisaged decentralisation as a strategy for improving quality and equity in primary education. The aim was to encourage active involvement of stakeholders at the grassroots level in planning, implementing and monitoring educational activities.
>
> The School Level Improvement Plan (SLIP) promotes a bottom-up planning process, as does the process of preparing an Upazila Primary Education Plan (UPEP) in each upazila (sub-district). The expectation was to establish a system of preparing Annual Operational Plans based on the consolidation of UPEPs, reflecting the needs identified through SLIP and situation analyses in each sub-district.
>
> PEDP-III aims to take the SLIP initiative further and promote the decentralisation of a more extensive set of education functions. The SLIP initiative was supported by the provision of SLIP grants, which were continued and scaled up under PEDP-III.
>
> SLIPs have been supported at central level and have made an impact at the school level. The level of commitment towards UPEPs has been much lower, however. There is little understanding of UPEP's relevance at the national and sub-district levels.

In theory, this new procedure represents an improvement as it allows tracking on a more regular basis of the conditions and use of facilities. Further research is needed to determine how effective it is. Schools visited in Dhaka and Gaibandha have not yet been exposed to this tool, which is gradually being introduced throughout the country. A key challenge, admits a senior representative of the Ministry of Education, is to ensure that health and education officials comply with their new duties, in the absence of corresponding performance indicators reflected in their Terms of Reference. Health workers, for instance, may be reluctant to register very critical information (e.g. re toilet cleanliness) on a form signed by headteachers, and left in their custody until the visit of the education official.

Incentives

The assessment of the school WASH component of SHEWA-B indicates that monitoring of WASH at school level and by district and upazila officials was insufficient. In addition, schools reckoned that external monitoring would have worked as a significant incentive to improve school WASH maintenance.[6] This suggests that the official monitoring system does not exert sufficient influence on the proper use and maintenance of facilities. Incentives are needed to boost school WASH, thinks WaterAid Bangladesh's Director of Fundraising and Organisational Learning, Imrul Muniruzzaman, who underlines that the success achieved on open defecation results from high-level political will translated into measures that include significant incentives to celebrate the accomplishment of stakeholders at village, union and district level. The political gain associated with the public acknowledgement of achievements, he adds, stimulated lower governmental-level leadership. Such incentive schemes boosted the commitment of an entire workforce. "Such measures have not yet been applied to school WASH work", explains Imrul Muniruzzaman. "What we need, for instance, is a national campaign to achieve 100% sanitation in schools. Incentives exist for academic performance, the recognition of high GPA-5 performance acts as an incentive, as it attracts students."

The Three Stars Approach, a certification system mainstreamed by UNICEF in many countries, is currently piloted in 500 schools in Bangladesh. Only part of the approach is implemented however – the incentive component is missing – and under sub-optimal conditions, resulting in mixed results. But UNICEF's WASH specialist in Dhaka thinks that the approach is highly relevant, particularly when coupled with a midday meal scheme, which donors are keen to support.

> **Box 8: Reward schemes can work**
>
> "School reward schemes can work", said the Assistant Director of DSHE Planning and Development Wing, who learned about the success of such schemes from an Indian colleague. "A key feature in their scheme is that district and sub-district level commissions were engaged in a bespoke monitoring process to select awardee schools. "Otherwise, given the reality of how things work in Bangladesh - it is not an equal society - chances are that the process of selecting the awardee will not be effective."

d) Curriculum

As noted in the education sector review conducted by the World Bank in 2013, teachers do not get much time to actually teach due to training, meetings and tardiness, but also because of the limited contact hours available during the academic year.[j] This may explain why the curriculum does not make more space for hygiene promotion. Participants of the workshop organised in Gaibandha stated that, whereas hygiene education is included in the official curriculum and in the textbooks for classes 3-5, teachers lack the training they need to translate theoretical knowledge into practical teaching.

Indeed, examinations expect almost 100% memory recall of textbook information, and therefore limit the time for innovative or child-centred teaching and learning. Also, teachers' motivation is generally low: the profession does not enjoy a high social status, career

---

[j] Contact hours in primary school are much lower than international norms (900–1,000 hours per year) as a result of many holidays, double-shifting and teachers' other time-consuming responsibilities. The annual total contact hours in grade 1 is 861 in a single-shift school and 595 hours in a double-shift school, resulting in 30% fewer schooling hours for children in double-shift schools, which make up about 90% of primary schools in the country

progression opportunities are limited, and incentives for innovating effective teaching and learning practices are non-existent.[3] Participants in the UNICEF Learning from the Field exercise confirm that the materials and teaching methods used during hygiene lessons are indeed not very interactive.[4]

Surveys carried out at headteacher conferences and interviews with students suggest that only 25% of schools carry out hygiene lessons as often as prescribed by the Government.[4] This is confirmed by exchanges with the WaterAid Bangladesh team: whilst hygiene education is part and parcel of the curriculum, it is not delivered by teachers. Likewise, teachers are often reluctant to deliver MHM content due to the taboos that still surround it. The recent efforts of the Government are encouraging, however: "We provide training on personal health hygiene and on cleanliness," explained the assistant director of the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education Planning and Development Wing. "73,000 teachers are trained. Two teachers – the headteacher and the assistant head – are selected so far, but we need to do more and include more if not all teachers. We work through 55 PTIs (Primary Teachers' Training Institute), and the teachers enrolled in these institutes have in-service training that lasts 1.5 years. We have decided that they too will receive the training on personal health hygiene and on cleanliness."

6.1.3. Budget

a) Budget amount

The Bangladeshi Government has pledged to ensure the provision of universal, compulsory and free primary education for all children, and has consequently prioritised education in its public sector investments. Bangladesh has achieved steady GDP growth over the last 10 years, and education sector allocations are currently about 2.3% of gross domestic product,[k] and 14% of total government expenditure.[30] Teacher salaries represent more than 90% of the total education budget, both in government and non-government schools, which leaves little room for operational expenditure.[3] In secondary education, dealing with the task of enhancing access and improving the quality of learning requires more resources than are currently available.

According to the superintendent of PEDP-III at the Department for Public Health Engineering, the total budget for the programme amounts to US$10 billion: 72% is allocated to teachers' salaries whilst the remaining 28% represents the development budget (36% of which is contributed by development partners). US$256 million is allocated for school WASH work, including US$154 million for the construction of WASH blocks and US$102 million for water sources. Two extra projects will be launched in July 2016 to support newly nationalised schools: US$166 million out of US$1.1 billion is allocated to WASH work. PEDP-III's school WASH allocation exclusively focuses on the construction of new facilities, of which it covers only 30% of total need.[4]

b) Budget adequacy

According to UNICEF, very few resources are allocated to the rehabilitation of facilities, or for training on their operation and management. Through PEDP-III and via the School Level

---

[k] which is relatively low compared to countries with a similar GDP per capita (World Bank, 2013)

Improvement Plan (SLIP) grant, each school receives US$390 annually (often disbursed late or not at all). This small SLIP fund[l] can be used to cover all discretionary purchases for schools. The maintenance of WASH facilities in schools is only one of many competing priorities.[4]

A recent study by International Resource Centre (IRC) and BRAC focusing on BRAC schools estimates that at least US$10 per student needs to be spent on the construction of WASH facilities, including disposal of faecal sludge and MHM. At least US$1.40 per student needs to be spent on recurrent costs, of which the continuous direct support to hygiene promotion activities and training of students and teachers is absolutely crucial to ensuring the sustainability of facilities and behaviour.[8]

Whilst the SLIP grant may not be enough to cover all WASH costs in addition to other expenses, informants point out that additional resources are available for schools. WaterAid Bangladesh team members refer to funds managed by upazila executive officers, the allocation of which are unfortunately frequently subject to political bias. Participants of the workshop organised in Gaibandha also stressed the scope for tapping into block grants transferred from central government to local government, such as grants from the World Bank-supported Local Governance Support Project.[m]

> **Box 9: The Local Governance Support Project (LGSP)**
>
> LGSP is the centrepiece of a broader programme to strengthen accountable forms of local governance across Bangladesh. The LGSP provided matching grants and capacity building support to Union Parishads (UPs), which is the lowest tier of rural local government bodies. LGSP I (2006-2011) has covered nearly 97% of the 4500 UPs. Each year the UPs are audited, and those that receive a clean audit received an expanded block grant. LGSP I [followed by LGSP II (2012-16) – US$492M for UP grants] is the first project of its kind in Bangladesh that supported systemic, country-wide reforms in the system of local governance.
>
> World Bank (2010) Bangladesh local governance at work: learning from the field.

The conversation with the head of BRAC's WASH programme confirms that well-managed schools linked to well-organised communities are capable of mobilising substantial financial resources. Milan Kanti Barua explains that, "the concept that has prevailed in the past 40 years is that the Government is here to deliver free services to people. But the truth is that people have got money but need technical support." Barua notes that school and community stakeholders may need time (up to four to five years) to mobilise funds, but if given this time they are able, for example, to cover more than 50% of the cost of 500 WASH blocks.

c) Budget spending and prioritisation

The review of the education sector carried out by the World Bank in 2013 stressed the weakness of accountability institutions and a lack of transparency in terms of resource allocation throughout the sector. The existence of two different Ministries is a constraint.

---

[l] The SLIP grant allows schools to manage activities according to their own identified school improvement needs. This was also seen as a step toward decentralisation of education through empowering the schools to manage their own affairs and to promote the role of the community in education (UNESCO 2015)

[m] During the open defecation-free movement period, 20% of the block grant had to be spent on sanitation (including school WASH). This condition is now relaxed and the block grant can be used to support any local priority

More generally, the lack of qualified staff for planning and budgeting, plus issues related to the quality of information and its timely transfer, were found to affect the efficiency of budgeting processes.

The review also underscored the confusing classification of development versus revenue budgets. The latter are determined and evaluated through distinct processes taken care of by different government bodies, which affect the consistency and coordination of budget decisions.[3] Further research is needed to analyse school WASH budget allocation and spending. The exchanges had during the workshop in Gaibandha suggest that budget monitoring is very poor throughout the system. Participants concurred that different administrative levels are not systematically collecting and managing the information required to analyse budget spending in schools.

Table 1: To what extent does WaterAid Bangladesh programming address school WASH policy-level bottlenecks?

▶ **Policy advocacy** – WaterAid Bangladesh's contribution at policy level is saluted by the sector. The school WASH Circular for secondary schools issued by the Ministry of Education in June 2015 partly results from WaterAid Bangladesh's successful advocacy work. This achievement will be supported by further efforts to disseminate survey findings and advocacy to integrate key indicators in the EMIS.

WaterAid Bangladesh's rights-based approach with regard to the Human Right to Water and Sanitation (HRTWS) and to the Right to Information leads to greater influence of community members and School Management Committees on the agenda of the Union Development Coordination Committee, and enhanced services at information centres. Local leadership is strengthened: targeting of pro-poor intervention is improved, and tax collection improves thanks to empowered CBOs. WaterAid Bangladesh's work also leads to the reactivation of the Union Development Coordination Committee, an important local-level coordination structure – rarely functional however in the absence of project support.

WaterAid Bangladesh and its partners seize the opportunities offered by school WASH programmes on the ground to test and demonstrate new designs for school WASH facilities or special features for MHM, for instance. By putting School Management Committees at the centre of the processes related to the procurement and oversight of contractors, WaterAid Bangladesh is supporting the application of quality standards.
Worth mentioning too is WaterAid Bangladesh's engagement with the Shornokishoree network (the largest media platform of Channel I) and the advocacy work conducted in this context on blending adolescent MHM with school WASH.

▶ **Planning** - WaterAid Bangladesh efforts to integrate WASH-health-nutrition in school WASH work are very relevant. WaterAid Bangladesh's strengthened relationships with the Ministry of Health bodes well for the WASH-health-nutrition integration sought in the new country strategy. The National Hygiene Baseline Survey provides a representative picture of school WASH challenges in the country, and represents a stepping stone for further monitoring efforts.

WaterAid Bangladesh introduced the Five Stars approach, which builds on WaterAid's school WASH model and UNICEF's Three Stars approach, and is aligned with the National Hygiene Promotion Strategy. The five stars refer to the five hygiene domains (water, sanitation, personal, food and environmental hygiene) articulated in the national hygiene promotion strategy. The approach, which spans over a period of 30-36 months at least, encourages teachers to analyse their own WASH situation, assess their related 'star status, and motivate them to engage in small doable actions to achieve five stars status. The approach fosters the engagement of School Management Committees. A two tier assessment committee engage in mentoring, assessing and declaring the WASH five star winner. The public recognition of the achievement of the latter is formalised by a certificate, and incentives to increase WASH facilities for girls in school.

6.2. Developing

6.2.1. Access

a) Access to adequate water supply

The percentage of primary schools with access to drinking water supply on campus, as reported by the Campaign for Popular Education in its latest Education Watch Report, has progressed from 47% in 1998 to 54% in 2008 and 74% in 2014,[9] indicating a marked acceleration in the provision of water supply services in the past few years. Findings from recent surveys confirm the current estimate: a joint study by WSUP and the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research of over 14,000 primary schools in 32 districts indicates that 73% of schools now have access to an improved source of water,[10] whilst the National Hygiene Baseline Survey carried out by WaterAid Bangladesh, the Government of Bangladesh Policy Support Unit, and the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research in over 700 government primary and high schools estimates that 79% of schools have access to a potable water source.[11]

90% of all primary schools rely on tube well water (usually equipped with hand-pumps in rural areas), and only a minority of schools use tap water. The distinction between shallow tube well (circa 57%) and deep tube well (circa 33%) matters, when considering the lack of space in school premises[n] and the observed difficulty of locating toilets a sufficient distance away from the water point.

Picture 3: Drinking water sources.

J-E Tiberghien   J-E Tiberghien   J-E Tiberghien

A hand pump on tube well is the main water point in Jamila Akter high school, Fulchari, Gaibandha (left). Storing water to cope with discontinuous water supply in Shaheed Monumia, government secondary school, Tejgaon, Dhaka (middle). Reverse osmosis filtration system in IPH school and college, Mohakhali, Dhaka (right)

---

[n] Water and Sanitation for the Urban Poor's recent study (as yet unpublished) shows that 16% of the 14,000 primary schools surveyed do not have space to construct new WASH facilities

Water quality is often an issue either due to microbiological contamination or high arsenic content. According to the Campaign for Popular Education, 13% of all primary schools face issues with arsenic content in their water. However, the findings from the WSUP/International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease study suggest that only 5% of all primary schools face such an issue. The National Hygiene Baseline Survey indicates that only one in five schools report having had their tube wells tested for arsenic contamination in the past year. During the SHEWA-B programme, coloured marks were painted on the walls of toilets to reflect the level of safety of the water source with regard to arsenic contamination. Marking followed water quality testing immediately after the construction of the water point.[o] The unreliability quality of water often draws students – 13%, according to the National Hygiene Baseline Survey – to carry water from home, a practice more prevalent in urban areas.

b) Access to adequate sanitation

The National Hygiene Baseline Survey suggests that 84% of all government primary and secondary schools have access to improved toilets for students. The survey indicates that toilets mostly consist of sanitary pit toilets (59%) and toilets with a septic tank (30%). Pit toilets prevail in rural areas (62%) whilst septic tanks are more common in urban schools (45%). 4% of all schools were found to rely on unimproved toilets (improper discharge of effluent or open pit). Overall, secondary schools provide greater access to improved toilets (57%) than primary schools (42%).[11]

The as-yet-unpublished WSUP/International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease survey found that 97% of government primary schools have at least one latrine present, but only 53% have improved latrines. This contrasts with findings from the Campaign for Popular Education's Education Watch Report, according to which 11% of schools do not provide any toilet facilities for students, and 57% of schools do not have separate toilets for teachers. A marked difference was observed between government primary schools and newly nationalised primary schools: 81% of the former have separate toilets for teachers vs. 44% of the latter.

Alam Monirul's study, carried out in 142 schools of Comilla and Rangamati districts, revealed the low ergonomics of most school toilets – good lighting was only found in 13% of all latrines (it was dark in 42% of them), and the quality of ventilation was found to be good in only 6% of cases. The size of toilets was found sufficient in only 18% of cases. The same study found that only 17% of toilets had floors made of easy to clean materials.[14] However, PEDP-III contributes to an increase in access to toilets at school, and to a marked improvement in the level of services provided. As described in section 6.2.2., the newly built toilets are gender-separated WASH blocks of a much-improved design.

---

[o] Observations by Gawade (2014) suggest some inconsistencies in the application of this system.

Picture 4: School toilets.

Old yet well maintained and functional toilets in Jamila Akter high school, Fulchari, Gaibandha (left). Brand new, gender-separated WASH block built in IPH school and college, Mohakhali, Dhaka (middle and right).

The level of service is also very much dependent on the number of students per toilet. The official standards stipulate a toilet/student ratio of 1:50, noting that 60% of toilets for boys can be replaced by urinals. The National Hygiene Baseline Survey revealed a median of 187 students per toilet. In 2013, UNICEF and WHO already noted an excessive ratio of 1:130.[31] IRC and BRAC (2015) also found that only 23% of schools surveyed[p] respected the official toilet/student ratio. The failure to meet this norm has severe consequences on the capacity of schools to keep these facilities clean and functional. Several informants noted that this problem is markedly aggravated in schools hosting community members during emergency situations.

The level of service also comprises solid waste management as well as the disposal and treatment of the effluent or faecal sludge collected in the toilet. The National Hygiene Baseline Survey shows that 44% of schools dispose of their solid waste into a pit or drum, but only 7% were observed to carry this out properly. The study carried out by IRC and BRAC on a limited sample suggests that around 35% of schools are openly dumping faecal sludge, creating water pollution and spread of diseases. Only one in five schools have a schedule for pit emptying and safely disposing of faecal sludge.[8]

c) Handwashing facilities

The survey recently carried out by WSUP/International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease in around 14,000 government primary schools in 32 districts indicated that a handwashing station is present in only 53% of all schools and that when present, only 70% of these stations are accessible to children. The survey conducted by IRC and BRAC in BRAC secondary schools indicated that 41% of schools had facilities available for handwashing

---

[p] The 117 schools selected include secondary schools for girls and co-education schools where there were no separate toilet facilities for girls or poor facilities before the intervention of the BRAC WASH school programme

with water and soap. Monirul observes that the Government has not put emphasis on group handwashing facilities in PEDP-III or the National Standards.[14]

> **Box 10: Fostering a move up the sanitation ladder**
>
> Depending on schools and locations, governing bodies, School Management Committees and communities may prefer different levels of school WASH services. This preference for a certain standard of service is subject to various considerations: the choice of a lower standard may reflect a lower capacity to contribute to the capital cost of the facility; more expensive facilities may be preferred due to their easier maintenance or by some prestige derived from premium services.
>
> BRAC's WASH head of programme insists that building high-standard WASH blocks in schools can allow showcasing the higher rungs of the sanitation ladder to the whole community. Whilst building top-notch facilities makes little sense where socio-economic conditions do not guarantee their proper operation and management, it can prove highly relevant under circumstances where good school governance prevails and where the community is committed to making a higher contribution and setting up a protocol for effective operation and management.
>
> Hence it is relevant to offer schools a choice and provide guidance to the school management bodies on the pros and cons of each technology and design, not only in terms of comfort of usage but also in terms of ease and cost of maintenance. Informants also point out that willingness to contribute to the capital cost of facilities may not reflect the position of the whole community but rather the interest of a few members of the governing body who have a particular stake in the school.

6.2.2. Equity

a) Addressing gender specific needs

The lack of adequate, segregated, clean and functional facilities, and the almost complete absence of menstrual hygiene facilities, is often cited as a reason for parents to remove their daughters from school, reducing their development opportunities and increasing the likelihood of an early marriage.[13] This is backed up by recent findings from the National Hygiene Baseline Survey. It reveals that 40% of girls surveyed report missing school during menstruation, which they find affects their school performance. Discussions with senior officials from the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education and the Department for Public Health Engineering all confirm that high priority is now given across the country to developing gender separated WASH facilities.

According to the 2014 Annual Sector Performance Report by the Directorate of Primary Education, the percentage of schools with separate functioning toilets for girls has significantly increased from 31% in 2010 to 64% in 2013.[12] These statistics differ markedly from the data reported by the Campaign for Popular Education: the Education Watch Report shows that separate toilets for girls were available in 23% of rural and 33% of urban schools. According to this source, shared toilets prevailed in 64% of rural schools and 62% of urban schools. The report also notes that separate facilities were more likely to be found in government primary schools than in other types. The origins of the discrepancies between these sources were not analysed in this study.

Picture 5: Girls' toilets in Shaheed Monumia, government secondary school, Tejgaon, Dhaka (left). IPH school and college, Mohakhali, Dhaka (middle and right).

Good lighting, privacy, extra space, soap and running water as well as a place to dispose sanitary pads or dry sanitary napkins are key features allowing proper MHM.

According to UNICEF, only 6% of schools have any form of menstrual hygiene facility.[13] This is despite the provision made by the National Standards for appropriate facilities for MHM for female teachers and adolescent girls. The National Hygiene Baseline Survey also reports that only 6% of schools (mostly urban secondary schools) provided menstrual hygiene education sessions for girls.

Exchanges with girls in a rural secondary school suggested that as a result of the interventions of WaterAid Bangladesh and its local NGO partners, girls are feeling more comfortable sharing MHM issues with teachers. There is a spill-over effect in communities, as girls manage to share with their parents and siblings more easily. However, representatives of Dushtha Shasthya Kendra (DSK), an NGO active in Dhaka, stress that female teachers remain very shy and reluctant to discuss MHM issues with other teachers, which raises questions on their capacity to address this topic with their students.

b) Addressing the needs of persons living with disabilities

The Bangladeshi Government has ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and approved the Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act, which calls for participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities. A Circular on disability-inclusive water and sanitation proposes the adoption of non-excludable 'targets' and 'means' for prioritising inclusion for all (including disabled people) to dignified, safe, sustainable, affordable and reliable access to water and sanitation services.[16]

Picture 6: Disabled-friendly toilets (Shaheed Monumia government secondary school, Tejgaon, Dhaka).

J-E Tiberghien

J-E Tiberghien

NGOs and the Government are increasingly trying to address the physical barriers preventing children living with disabilities to access education. Handrails in toilet cubicles are helpful, but a ramp of access to WASH blocks is often needed too. The lack of practicable pathways from households to the school often represent a bottleneck too.

The Ministry of Primary and Mass Education reports the enrolment of 82,700 children with disabilities (55% of whom are boys[q]), which represents 0.4% of the 19.5 million primary school children.[12] Several informants note that a large number of 'unseen' disabled children spend their lives locked at home (where some receive some private tuition). Children with disabilities almost certainly make up a disproportionately large percentage of out-of-school children.[32] Their attendance at school depends in large part on the capacity of the Government to address the cultural, institutional and physical barriers hindering their access to education. The National Standards for school WASH facilities stipulate that each school should have at least one separate cubicle each for male and female children with disabilities with ramped access, a wide door, sufficient space inside to manoeuvre and provision of a handrail.

The official toilet design (see Annexe E) does gradually integrate such features, but a lack of specific budget has been a constraint in enforcing this policy, according to participants in the workshop in Gaibandha, who observe nonetheless that the facilities currently built by the Directorate of Primary Education comply with the standards.

---

[q] Girls with disability may be more vulnerable than boys – for example, more open to sexual abuse – and therefore parents may be more inclined to keep disabled daughters at home in order to protect them. In school, the recorded number of girls with disabilities may be low because cultural and social practices make it more difficult to identify those girls who do not have a visible disability
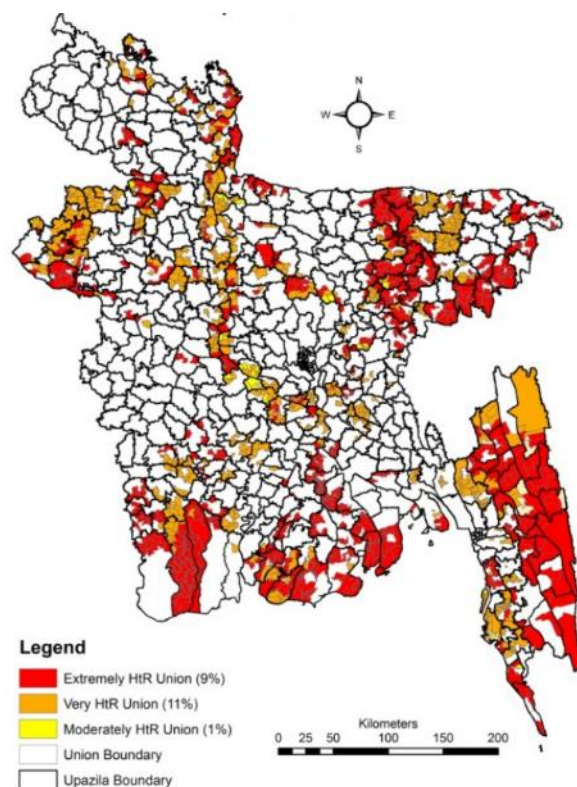
c) Geographic discrepancies

Hard to reach areas

The country paper prepared by the Government for SACOSAN VI points out that the excellent progress achieved in the sanitation sector is challenged by quality of service, and coverage in hard to reach areas i.e., hilly regions, islands (chars), swamps, tea gardens and water-scarce areas. In such areas, only 36% of all households have improved sanitation facilities. Frequent floods, cyclones and other natural disasters cause damage to sanitation facilities, lowering the sanitation coverage in coastal and vulnerable areas. Challenges are also present with regard to sustainability, hygiene issues and total sanitation coverage.[16]

Figure 4: Hard to reach areas (PSU WSS, 2011)

This observation applies to school WASH work. The significant gap between the targeted universal coverage of school WASH facilities and the current coverage of toilets in schools (84%) is, according to UNICEF, chiefly due to a lack of facilities in hard to reach areas, and an inequitable allocation of resources.[4] UNICEF explored the relevance and potential for open and distance learning in Bangladesh and analysed initiatives carried out by numerous NGOs in the country. [r] Unilever's manager of their 'School of Five' hygiene promotion campaign suggested that, whilst official open and distance learning programmes are currently limited, the Government is planning a significant development of such kinds of education for hard to reach areas. These new programmes will provide scope for including state-of-the-art content on school WASH-related issues.

Rural-urban disparities

Rural-urban disparities are also notable and coincide with the polarisation of WASH investment in urban areas: while 76% of the population live in rural areas, only 29% of WASH development budgets benefit them. Whilst 80% of all schools surveyed in the National Hygiene Baseline Survey have access to an improved and functional drinking water source, this percentage reaches 91% in urban schools, where tap water supply is much more frequent (33% of urban school vs. 6% of all schools).[11] Likewise, the Campaign for Popular Education found that separate toilets for girls are 1.44 times more prevalent in

---

[r] Open and distance learning provides a means of overcoming certain barriers in basic education: of enabling access to national qualifications outside formal schools, of overcoming geographical barriers, of training large numbers of teachers in situ. It also offers the potential to deliver better value for money, particularly with the economies of scale that can be achieved in high population south Asian countries. UNICEF (2009) Open and distance learning for basic education in south Asia op cit

urban schools, and that schools without any toilet were 2.8 times more likely to be found in rural areas.[9] In the view of the UNICEF WASH specialist met in Dhaka, beyond school WASH variations in the quality of the learning environment and teaching can presumably be tracked along an urban-rural gradient – the closer the city, the more favourable the conditions, presumably.

6.2.3. Capacity

a) Community support and social norms

Positive changes

Bangladeshi social norms related to sanitation have evolved markedly in the past decade: owning a toilet has now become a matter of dignity, with clear connotations on social status. At community level, open defection free status results in a shared sense of honour and prestige. People's willingness to contribute to improving school sanitation has reportedly increased.[16]

BRAC's head of WASH programmes notes that, "people are gradually shifting their attitude and want to move up the sanitation ladder. Showcasing top-notch facilities in schools is a very good means of fostering such movement. School stakeholders are our programme organisers and catalysts of community WASH activities."

The shift in social norms is not as complete as the statistics suggest, however. Although open defecation declined from 34% in 1990 to 1% in 2015,[16] only 57% of people use an 'improved' sanitation facility, and a third of households share latrines.**Error! Bookmark not defined.** NICEF's WASH specialist confirms that the near-complete eradication of open defecation is largely theoretical, and that in practice adults and children still go to the field and shared latrines are not often used. In his view, there is still around 10% of the population practising open defecation.

Despite this, Bangladesh's progress is remarkable, and a landmark at global level. Its exemplary achievement on sanitation is the result of early recognition that attitudes and behaviours are as important as any technology or infrastructure, and that changing social and cultural norms are central to changing

> **Box 11: Gaining local support – learning from BRAC**
>
> BRAC have established a good system, but how do they do it? They follow a holistic approach, addressing people's various needs through separate units (e.g. economic development, education, adolescent issues, health). BRAC has become a brand. They gradually built their reputation through compliance of strict rules imposed on their staff and outreach workers, capacitated during quality induction training. The commitment of the latter propagates towards community members, who feel motivated to engage in the process. In addition, BRAC school WASH interventions generally take place following other programmes, in an environment where people trust the organisation and the process.
>
> Frontline workers and their direct supervisors are local residents. After phase-out, they get transferred to the next programme in the area. They are not afraid of losing their job, as opposed to staff working in other programmes, who start looking for a job six month before the end of project to avoid getting jobless. BRAC's strong Management Information System (MIS) and financial systems are other key assets.
>
> Adapted from a focus group discussion with HDRC consultants.

sanitation practices. The implementation of community-inclusive approaches activating channels such as village WASH committees, cluster meetings, local government level coordination meetings, student brigades, school WASH committees, religious leaders, local government representatives etc. has been critical to success.[16] WaterAid Bangladesh's research manager stresses the tremendous benefit that can be derived from integrating local support organisations, judging by the success met in coordinating actions to support family planning and other health issues.

A slow process

Researchers consulted at Human Development Research Centre (HDRC) estimate that such a change in social norms is a long process that could take up to 15 years. They contrast this requirement with the short timeframe of most school WASH programmes, which are typically three years long, but often only allow for one year of serious engagement with school stakeholders, since one year is allocated to approving and handling preliminary admin issues, six months to getting the programme going, and the final six months to exiting. Organisations such as BRAC, who stay much longer in their areas of intervention, supporting schools and communities on a broad spectrum of activities, and who gradually manage to build capacity, cohesion, and commitment amongst school stakeholders, create very enabling environments for the implementation of their school WASH programmes.

Norms and habits are also slowly evolving with regard to handwashing. The National Baseline Hygiene Survey found that, although more than two-thirds of households had a location near the toilet for post defecation handwashing, only 40% of these handwashing stations had water and soap available. Moreover, only 13% of children aged from three to five, and 57% of female caregivers, washed both hands with soap during handwashing demonstrations.

In schools, the survey conducted by WSUP and International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research notes that 80% of community members and 100% of education officials considered that handwashing facilities at school were inadequate. This high level of awareness does not yet translate into a demand for or a commitment to improving the condition of these facilities. UNICEF stresses that schools have no incentive to maintain these facilities due to a lack of demand by students, parents and teachers, and the absence of a compelling indicator in the Annual School Census.[13]

b) Hygiene education a priority in the country

National strategies

The National Hygiene Baseline Survey points out that the nation's breakthrough in tackling open defecation and increasing access to safe water may not lead to proportionate health and nutritional gains due to the absence of adequate hygiene practices, especially handwashing with soap.[11] This gap is well recognised in national plans and strategies:

The **Sector Development Plan (FY 2011-2025) for the water and sanitation sector in Bangladesh** proposed highly relevant recommendations to raise hygiene education as a

national priority and to conduct more effective programmes:

- Explore new approaches effective in translating people's knowledge into practice.
- Prepare integrated information, education and communication guidelines covering hygiene promotion, school WASH, WASH operation and management and water safety plans.
- Combine hygiene promotion with water and sanitation interventions.
- Embed hygiene promotion in the proposed National Strategies for water supply and sanitation.
- Coordinate with sector and inter-sector partners: through the national forum and local WATSAN committees, and with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Environment.[24]

The **Hygiene Promotion Strategy for Water Supply and Sanitation in Bangladesh (2012)** largely builds on these recommendations. It stresses the sheer importance of the delivery of hygiene education to children as part of their curriculum, which shall 'bring the desired change in community behaviour', and 'have a splashing effect in society as a whole'. Acknowledging the responsibility of the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education and Ministry of Education in the promotion of hygiene practices in primary and secondary education, the strategy stipulates the need to conduct specific hygiene promotion programmes emphasising the role of children as promoters of improved hygiene practices in households. Also, it underlines that the sanitation guidelines provided by Local Government Division (LGD) enables WATSAN committees to conduct awareness-raising sessions on hygiene in every school once a year. Finally, it designates School Management Committees as the mandated implementer of hygiene promotion in educational institutions.[33]

Hygiene is also now well embedded in the **Draft National Water Supply and Sanitation Strategy (2014)**,[34] as shown in Box 12. In a recent study, the World Bank opines that it is high time this strategy gets finalised and the action plan implemented and monitored through a high-level inter-sectoral committee to ensure proper inter-ministerial coordination.[1]

Box 12. Hygiene promotion: strategic direction

1. Explore new approaches for hygiene promotion that are effective in translating people's knowledge into practice
2. Prioritise handwashing with soap, and MHM.
3. Address specific behavioural domains (e.g. personal including MHM, food hygiene, environmental hygiene).
4. Target mothers of under-five and school children, health care assistants, religious and community leaders.
5. Undertake collaborative initiatives with private sector for promoting hygiene related consumer products like soaps, sanitary napkins, oral rehydration salts, water storage tanks and handwashing devices.
6. Undertake national hygiene and sanitation campaign in partnership with media.
7. Work collectively with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for cooperation with their health workers, the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education and Ministry of Education for hygiene and sanitation promotion in primary and secondary schools.

MLGRD&CO (2014). National Strategy for Water Supply and Sanitation. Draft Final.

Practices on the ground

The wisdom captured in these strategies and action plans is not yet reflected in practice, and the weakness of hygiene promotion remains a bottleneck for school WASH nationally. As noted above, PEDP-III focuses on building WASH facilities in schools but makes little provision for hygiene promotion or training.[13] Judging by surveys carried out at headteacher conferences and interviews with students, UNICEF estimates that only 25% of schools carry out hygiene lessons as often as prescribed by the Government.[4] A researcher at HDRC, who analysed the SHEWA-B programme, recalls that hygiene education messages are typically transmitted to students during assemblies, but rarely through formal lessons. He also notes that a frequent message voiced by teachers in relation to MHM is that 'you learn this from your home'.

WSUP's recent survey of circa 14,000 schools indicates that hygiene lessons are delivered in 72% of schools. The study stresses, however, that the School Management Committees (responsible for hygiene education under the Hygiene Promotion Strategy for Water Supply and Sanitation in Bangladesh) are not aware of the importance of handwashing, and that teachers are not properly trained to deliver such lessons (see Section 6.1.2.c).[10] Staff members of the local NGO DSK in Dhaka point out that teachers' awareness can easily be reawakened, however. The problem, they stress, is that they are very low-paid – they sometimes earn less than rickshaw pullers – and have many other priority engagements, such as after-hours private tuition. Because of their long working days, teachers are often less willing or able to engage beyond their strictly mandatory duties at school.
The Directorate of Primary Education's deputy director observes that the lack of funding for hygiene promotion in school is an issue. In his view, the impact of current awareness-raising activities, such as workshops organised for mothers, is uncertain due to a lack of monitoring. According to him, a mass awareness-raising programme is needed. UNICEF, Save the Children, BRAC and many other NGOs have been supporting the Government by developing, testing and refining information, education and communication materials to promote hygiene in primary and secondary schools (e.g. guide books such as 'Better Health, Better Education', training modules, poster flip charts, flash cards, weight and height scales, class routines, cartoons like the Mina cartoon, games etc.). Such materials are only used sporadically throughout the country, and observers underline that the Government should finalise child-friendly toolkits.[35]

Worth mentioning here are widescale initiatives led by BRAC, the World Food Programme and Unilever on hygiene education. BRAC's WASH programme fosters the delivery of monthly hygiene education sessions to students. In each school, two teachers (a male and a female) are trained on WASH activities (technical content and methodology). As part of this training, teachers are provided with visual materials to support hygiene education. Unilever's School of Five programme[s] raises the awareness of school stakeholders on handwashing with soap and seeks to make the practice easy, desirable, rewarding and habitual. Through its school-feeding programme, which benefited three million children in 2015, the World Food Programme provides teachers with resources to teach children and

---

[s] School of Five was carried out in more than 14,000 schools over 32 districts between June 2014 and June 2015. As explained by the manager of School of Five in Bangladesh, in addition to engaging school stakeholders, the programme also involves community level stakeholders, such as imams, and encourages the latter to address hygiene in connection with dignity and faith on Fridays

parents about social challenges, vegetable gardening, health, nutrition and hygiene. Exchanges held with a large group of children aged 7-9 years old from a school targeted by this programme revealed high integration of knowledge related to handwashing with soap (i.e. purpose/rationale, oral/faecal contamination routes, good handwashing practices…). The school did not provide however the handwashing station required for the optimal practice of this learning.

Handwashing with soap

For several years, NGOs have joined forces to make a success of Global Handwashing Day, and to raise public awareness on the need to foster this fundamental life-saving hygiene practice. In 2009, by rallying around 53,000 students across the country to wash hands with soap on the global celebration day, Bangladeshi students entered the Guinness Book of World Records.[36] Since then, the event has kept gaining momentum: in 2011, 18 million children took part in the event, which included discussions and demonstrations of handwashing with soap across Bangladesh.[37] In 2015, Global Handwashing Day was also a success, involving a wide range of organisations including: the Department for Public Health Engineering, BRAC, DSK, Max Foundation, Muslim Aid, NGO-Forum, OXFAM, Plan, Practical Action, SAFE, Terre des Hommes, UNICEF, UST, WaterAid, WASH Alliance, WSUP and WaterAid Bangladesh's partner, Village Education Resource Centre (VERC).

Picture 7: Global Handwashing Day 2015

WaterAid

In Bangladesh, hundreds of students joined a demonstration of handwashing with soap at a celebration at Osmani Memorial Auditorium.

c) Student engagement

Agents of change

The various sources consulted during this research corroborated that fostering children's 'agents of change' role in order to bring about changes in hygiene habits in the community is very relevant. Recent programmes, such as SHEWA-B, have massively and successfully engaged children as change agents, noted a researcher at HDRC. Members of the WaterAid Bangladesh team also referred to numerous anecdotal findings from projects demonstrating the positive influence of children in their households with regard to hygiene practices. Participants of the workshop held in Gaibandha described students as a powerful catalyst for change on WASH. They noted the importance of ensuring ownership of WASH activities by students, and stressed that since sustainable change depends on a shift in mind-set, large campaigns disseminating slogans are particularly effective.

Brigades

The National Standards define the plan of the Government to engage students in helping establish improved hygiene habits. 'Student brigades' are to be formed to learn, practice and monitor hygiene in and around schools. School catchments are to be divided into 12 to 15 clusters. In each of them, children from grade 3-5 (primary school) and 6-8 (secondary school) form a brigade, which is oriented and entrusted with responsibilities covering school cleanliness and the promotion of hygiene both in schools and communities.[27] Mohammad Monirul Alam, WASH specialist at UNICEF, observes that the brigades, initially introduced by UNICEF under PEPD-II to support WASH objectives, have now been mainstreamed by the Government, seen their role expanded, and their name changed to 'student councils' in PEPD-III. In his view, this represents an improvement: the fact that the council is in charge of a wider range of activities (including gardening, entertainment, health, etc.) triggers a much greater interest among children, which is very palpable during highly contested elections.

The discussions held during the workshop in Gaibandha suggest that student councils are more prevalent in primary schools, and that students do not feel excluded from such groups. In secondary schools, councils take a different shape – led by teachers – and tend to be better organised as a result. Sometimes, this can be reduced to one male and one female 'captain' representative for each age group.

Gawade (2014) reports highly motivated brigades in some schools targeted by SHEWA-B.[6] Mahfuj Rahman, Programme Officer at WaterAid Bangladesh, notes that success stories featuring proactive brigades and councils, albeit largely undocumented, are not rare. Success, he observes, often hinges on the quality of school management and does not necessarily require external NGO support. In all cases, informants concur that sustained involvement of teachers and headteachers is critical, which requires maintaining their motivation.[14] According to Mohammad Monirul Alam, in the absence of supporting NGOs teachers tend to lack the motivation to set up such councils, which need to be reactivated every year as the elder leaders graduate. Overall, he estimates that no more than 20% of all brigades or councils are functional – albeit mandatory, these structures mostly exist on paper. Indeed, this is confirmed by the deputy director of the Directorate of Primary Education, who explains that the motivation of teachers to support the creation of brigades,

their ongoing activities, and to revive them each year, is limited. From the perspective of teachers, he adds, the brigades and councils merely contribute to school management objectives assigned to School Management Committees, over which teachers have only limited influence.

Other forms of student engagement exist of course, such as the adolescent clubs recently set up by UNICEF to disseminate MHM messages and foster school–community links around taboo issues. SHEWA-B supported training of 11,800 adolescent girls on water, sanitation and MHM, providing them with the skills and motivation to work alongside governmental community health promoters, and volunteer within their communities. In this approach each teenage girl is responsible for promoting improved sanitation and hygiene among ten households. Many girls also established community shops or 'Sanimarts', where they sell sanitary pads, soaps, detergents, toilet brushes, toothbrushes etc.[16]

Also, the 'little doctors' were referred to by several informants as a potential vehicle for WASH promotion: little doctors are students aged eight to ten who undertake health education and other health-related activities including health check-ups and administration of drugs for intestinal worms. Little doctors is a multi-sectoral initiative lead by Communicable Disease Control with the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, FHI360, USAID, Save the Children, BRAC and other partners.[38]

Table 2: How is WaterAid Bangladesh contributing to the developing component of the school WASH bottleneck analysis?

▶ **Demonstrating models as evidence for policy advocacy** – WaterAid Bangladesh and partners contribute to increasing school WASH coverage under relatively standard software + hardware integrated approaches. Although this input is quantitatively marginal considering the magnitude of the needs at country level, it allows the country programme and its partners to learn from the field and gain the legitimacy needed to influence sector policies and practices.

▶ **Promoting inclusive principles and approaches** – the practice of WaterAid Bangladesh and its partners has been evolving towards supporting child, gender and increasingly differently–abled friendly principles, both on the hardware (design) and software (sensitisation and training) facets of projects, as well as through policy research. Increased emphasis has been put on MHM. Through service delivery projects and studies, WaterAid Bangladesh is learning and accumulating elements for policy advocacy. For instance, a situation analysis was undertaken to better understand the sanitation practices of persons with disabilities in the Hill Tracts region, followed by the construction of disabled-friendly latrines with water facilities inside or close to toilets. Likewise, the Bangladesh National Hygiene Baseline Survey (2014) led by WaterAid Bangladesh significantly enhanced the understanding of the current state hygiene practices and laid a platform to talk about MHM by eliciting the current situation.

▶ **Redressing inequalities** – with its partners, WaterAid Bangladesh intervenes in public schools, where students are likely to come from lower income families and in project areas where the needs are most acute, thus reducing geographical and socio-economic disparities. But interventions in hard to reach areas are expensive and studies can help raise attention on the needs of specific populations, as demonstrated by WaterAid Bangladesh through a research shedding light upon the WASH needs of specific populations living in hard to reach areas, Bede or nomadic communities, or marginalised ethnic populations working in tea gardens.

▶ **Promoting hygiene education** – WaterAid Bangladesh is actively working to institutionalise hygiene education in schools. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare engaged WaterAid Bangladesh to disseminate the National Hygiene Promotion Strategy and build the awareness of school teachers. WaterAid is also contributing to make Global Handwashing Day a success in Bangladesh.

▶ **Integrating WinS work in community WASH** – Using children as vectors of change - WAB and partners try to integrate as much as possible WinS into community WASH programmes and make use of students brigades and councils. WaterAid's partners are also facilitating a number of Adolescent Clubs.

6.3. Sustaining

6.3.1. Operation and management inputs

a) Supply chain for parts and services

Picture 8: Maintaining systems.

Failure to replace spare parts due to resource constraints keeps one of two water filtering devices out of use in Shaheed Monumia government secondary school, Tejgaon, Dhaka (left). High fees charged by IPH school and college, Mohakhali, Dhaka, may cover the cost of the external services on which the school relies to maintain their R-O filtration system (middle). After several failed attempts to mend the hand pump in the backyard, school management resigned itself to have the school rely solely on the other water point located in the headteacher's office, Katlamaré government primary school (co-ed), Gozaria, Fulchari, Gaibandha, (right).

According to UNICEF's WASH specialist Mohammad Monirul Alam, "in comparison with many other countries, the potential for effective operation and maintenance is theoretically higher in Bangladesh: most schools have WASH facilities and both water and soap are available in even the remotest places. Furthermore, the predominant religion is Islam, which has a focus on regular, systematic ablutions and cleansing." However, he notes that theft and vandalism are frequent issues: soap and taps get stolen in both rural and urban schools, and facilities often get vandalised. Vandalism has seemingly declined, according to the exchanges held during both field visits and key informant interviews, but students sometimes make fun by playing with WASH accessories such as glasses or water purifiers, causing frequent damage.

Ensuring regular maintenance of water filtration systems is often challenging due to the weakness of the supply chain for spare parts, and the lack of training given to teachers on maintenance of these usually quite simple devices (despite their apparent sophistication). Schools often rely on service providers, who may discontinue the distribution of certain products, may not have the corresponding spare parts, or may go out of business.

b) Committee in charge of operation and management

Structures in place

In order to balance decision-making powers within the education system and empower individual schools, School Management Committee guidelines were revised by the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education in 2012. This reform grants School Management Committees a vast range of mandates to improve school performance. Committees have a more active role in school management: they support school block grant operation to implement the School-Level Improvement Plan (SLIP), monitor regular teaching-learning activities at school, appoint teaching assistants or aides in case of an acute shortage of teachers in the school, and take actions on children's enrolment and dropout issues.[3]

As noted in section 6.1.1.d, the National Standards entrust School Management Committees and Parent Teacher Associations with the responsibility of monitoring hygiene sessions and ensuring the sustainable use of school WASH facilities, including their day-to-day and periodic maintenance (planning, resource allocation, monitoring). As noted by practitioners participating in UNICEF's 2014 Learning from the Field session, the Standards fail to provide concrete guidance for School Management Committees and Parent Teacher Associations, or minimum requirements for cleanliness and maintenance.

Parent Teacher Associations provide a forum for parents and teachers to work together. In theory, they complement School Management Committees to create an effective school-community partnership in education, but in practice they remain a weak, largely silent and ineffective body.[39] Monirul (2014) notes that the level of awareness of their duties among Parent Teacher Association members is very low. Parent Teacher Associations sometimes raise funds for maintenance and repair work of school WASH facilities, such as the purchase of soap and cleaning agents.[14]

At the secondary level, having an approved School Management Committee/governing body is also one of the conditions of being eligible for monthly stipends by the Government.

NGOs often establish WASH-specific committees. BRAC's WASH committees, for instance, include 14

> **Box 13: School Management Committees**
>
> A typical School Management Committee has, as its members, the headteacher as member secretary, two teacher representatives, four guardians, a donor and a founder as representatives, and a female representative from the community. All of these members gather to elect the chairperson among them or another person who is well-respected in the community.
>
> In registered non-government primary and secondary schools, a School Management Committee or a Madrasah Managing Committee is responsible for hiring staff (including teachers), controlling expenditures, approving budgets, and mobilising resources. Government schools, on the other hand, may not have fully established School Management Committees and do not have such a well-defined role for them. At the higher secondary level, the corresponding school committees are called governing bodies and fulfil a similar role. World Bank (2013) Bangladesh education sector seeding fertile ground: education that works for Bangladesh

members representative of all stakeholders: teachers, parents, School Management Committee members, school cleaners. The headteacher is the chairperson and a female teacher the secretary. The overall responsibility of the committee is managing, maintaining

and mobilising funds for the school's sanitation. Monthly or bimonthly meetings allow the committee to review activities, including latrine use and maintenance.[40]

School Management Committee functionality

The Education Sector Review recently carried out by the World Bank praises Bangladesh's policy of involving communities in the oversight of schools through School Management Committees but notes that, "this well-intended policy translates into a bad practice because of the political capture of Committees, as schools often welcome political support to withstand policy enforcement."[3] Haq and Islam (2005) also pointed out this issue, stressing the excessive influence of headteachers and local politics on School Management Committees, suggesting that headteachers frequently arrange to have a friend or relative in the Committee, and politicians view membership as a reward for their supporters. They also observed that these problems were more significant in registered non-government primary schools established by people with vested interests, which potentially conflicted with the overall good of the school.[39] Such schools are currently being assimilated as government schools, and during this long transition period, School Management Committees appear to be becoming less functional, according to one headteacher consulted during this research. The same source underscores the irregularity of meetings, the difficulty in achieving a satisfying level of participation, and low involvement of female Committee members in decision-making. According to a recent study by Chatterley (2014), the frequency of Committee meetings and the regularity of attendance do not represent the best proxy indicators for Committee involvement in school WASH.[15]

The Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education's assistant director of planning and development asserts that in practice, headteachers are making the decisions. He confirms that parents are often not sufficiently literate or aware of schools' needs to identify priorities. As a result, decisions are often largely made by the headteacher, as the secretary of the School Management Committee. Chatterley et al (2014) found that the presence of a school WASH champion in the school – either a focal teacher, the headteacher or a Committee member – is the key factor determining the sustainability of the activities taking place around WASH issues.[15] Similar evidence was found during the visit to Shahid Monu Miah school at Tejgoan, Dhaka, where an elderly female teacher was

> **Box 14: Showcasing 'our' school**
>
> The elite of society, often well represented in School Management Committees, are hard to engage and have little availability. They do not hesitate to depute someone to vote or sign on their behalf […] Some School Management Committees are in charge of several schools and their members are proud to show their power: they can fire teachers. […] Then the media also attracts a lot of attention. Such Committee members have no interest in WASH unless stars are awarded, which as the result of the GPFI exams, attract media attention and given them much visibility. The composition of School Management Committees changes every other year and competition revolves around how much one has achieved during his or her tenure.
>
> Adapted from a focus group discussion with members of DSK team.

taking the spontaneous lead for maintaining hygienic toilets and promoting MHM, even a few years after the phase out of a DSK project under WaterAid funding.

The level of awareness of Committee members of their duties in general, and their WASH-related responsibilities in particular, are critical factors. Haq and Islam noted in 2015 that

whilst School Management Committees wield a great deal of power, guidelines for them have not been clearly outlined. Whilst the reform of School Management Committees has presumably addressed this important issue, practitioners participating in UNICEF's 2014 Learning from the Field session noted that the Standards fail to provide concrete guidance for School Management Committees and Parent Teacher Associations, or minimum requirements for cleanliness and maintenance.[4] The workshop organised in Gaibandha confirmed that School Management Committees and Parent Teacher Associations are often disorganised, unaware of and not much interested in their WASH responsibilities. Participants stressed that parents are generally exclusively concerned by academic development, in comparison to which WASH is a very marginal issue.

Partners across the sector note a consistent level of indifference and lack of responsibility of School Management Committees towards the operation and management of WASH facilities. This attitude, Mohammad Monirul Alam says, primarily stems from a lack of demand across most levels of the education system, a lack of training on WASH, and the absence of a sanction and incentives mechanism fostering compliance with standards of cleanliness and functionality of WASH facilities.[14] In his evaluation of school WASH programmes in Bangladesh, Gawade (2014) also signals the importance of building the capacities of School Management Committees: "Mobilisation of School Management Committees for upkeep and maintenance of WASH facilities remained unaddressed. Although School Management Committees are responsible for the operation and maintenance of WASH facilities in schools, their capacity building and involvement remained considerably weak."

Representatives of WaterAid Bangladesh stress that school WASH projects are generally treated as side components of community WASH projects. Mobilisation of school stakeholders, awareness-raising on school WASH, and capacity building of School Management Committees are carried out effectively, but inputs beyond this phase are very limited: facilities are built, hygiene behaviour training is carried out, but it is as if schools are left to their own devices to put into action all the knowledge they have received in the months before. A representative from the Directorate of Primary Education also notes that the rapid turnover of Committee members, who only stay two years in office, is a problem since knowledge and capacity built over that time is then lost.

c) Adequate and reliable funding for school WASH operation and maintenance costs?

The legal framework under which government primary schools operate precludes them from directly charging fees to their students, with the exception of examination and scholarship fees, given that they receive full public financial support. Although there is some scope for School Management Committees to raise contributions from the local community for school development (e.g. an initiative in BRAC schools collects voluntary contributions of soap from students), a school's ability to raise funds for operating expenses is severely constrained. Therefore, these schools are heavily dependent on government funding for most of their operating expenses.[37]

The study conducted by Monirul confirms that the SLIP grant on its own cannot cover school WASH costs in addition to other expenses, and suggests that a share (estimated at 2.5%) of the school budget should also be earmarked for school WASH operation and management expenses. UNICEF's WASH specialist highlights the serious budget

constraints faced by schools in mobilising funds for procurement of supplies (soap, cleaning materials) and maintenance (minor and major). In primary schools, he notes, teachers often contribute their own money to purchase soaps and cleaning materials (an observation verified during school visits), and voluntary contributions from communities are rare. But as noted in Section 6.1.3., additional resources are available for schools and most informants concur that well-organised communities are capable of mobilising substantial financial resources. The capacity to mobilise external funds and to make good use of them is strongly determined by the type of School Management Committee in office. A representative of the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education illustrates this point by suggesting the following typology for School Management Committees:

- "Type 1 School Management Committees are very good: they receive the Government SLIP fund and in many schools they are capable of mobilising extra money from communities, which they also deposit in their account. They don't have any financial issues.
- Type 2 School Management Committees are very tough: they are the robbers who compel headteachers to [sign the inappropriate invoice and] give them the money, they are the worst type.
- Type 3 School Management Committee does not bother: they are passive, they let the headteacher decide and sign whatever he or she submits to them."

6.3.2. Maintenance

a) Available vs. functional and useable latrines

Status

The National Hygiene Baseline Survey reports that only four in ten latrines in primary schools are unlocked (and could thus be used by students when needed, while just one in four is clean (i.e. clean floor, slab and pan).[11] The WSUP/International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease study of over 14,000 primary schools in 32 districts reflects a more favourable picture: 79% of all schools have at least one functional toilet[t] and 43% of all schools have clean toilets.[10] The Campaign for Popular Education's Education Watch Report indicates that toilets are clean in 62% of schools, and that clean toilets are more likely to be found in urban schools, and in kindergarten and government primary schools.[9]

Monirul (2014) notes the marked gap between **availability coverage** (84%) defined as the total number of improved latrines at surveyed schools divided by the number of students, based on a 50:1 student to latrine ratio; **contact coverage** (26%), defined as the proportion of students who use an improved functional latrine that is within 50 metres of all users and which is clean and open for students during school hours; and effective coverage (9%), defined as the proportion of schools with an improved functional latrine within 50 metres of all users, used by students, open during school hours, built with easy-to-clean materials, with cleaning agents available and running water available inside the latrine.[14]

---

[t] This is relatively consistent with the official data, which suggest that 83% of all types of primary education institutions count at least one functioning toilet. Department of Primary Education (2014) Bangladesh primary education annual sector performance report.

According to HDRC consultants, whereas around 80% of secondary schools employ cleaners, primary schools generally do not count on such support. UNICEF's WASH specialist notes the existence of various arrangements in primary schools involving either school brigades, children, or hired peons or janitors, and stresses that cleaning is generally irregular or absent.[14] He explains that the prevailing arrangement in primary schools sees students clean the toilets, and points out that such a practice was found to be socially acceptable by a regional study. School visits are allowed to witness that students are organised in groups and follow a schedule to clean the toilets on a rota basis. The deputy director of the Directorate of Primary Education notes that teachers usually devise their own arrangement to keep their separate toilet clean, and underlines the difficulty of keeping student toilets clean given the high student-to-toilet ratio.[u]

As noted above, financial constraints, the lack of organised demand by students, parents and teachers to have clean, well-maintained toilets, and the absence of incentives for schools to maintain their WASH facilities (See Section 6.1.2.c) all contribute to this situation.[13] The presence of a maintenance plan, regular cleaning schedule, and a specific person held accountable for its implementation were found to be key success factors by Chatterley et al. (2014). Overall, the importance of good school governance cannot be overstated, notes Imrul Muniruzzaman, WaterAid Bangladesh's Director of Fundraising and Organisational Learning, who nonetheless reckons that NGOs tend to shy away from addressing these core issues because of their highly sensitive nature and the risk of confrontation.

b) Regular provision of soap and water for handwashing?

According to the National Hygiene Baseline Survey, approximately one-third of all schools have water and soap available inside or near (<30 feet) an improved functional and unlocked toilet accessed by students. This situation is more frequent in urban schools (47%) than in rural schools (31%), and in secondary schools (42%) than in primary schools (30%).[11] Urban schools reported spending more money to purchase soap: 102 Taka (US$1.32) versus 56 Taka in rural areas (US$0.72). This is relatively consistent with the findings from WSUP/International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease recent study, which indicates that soap is available in 38% of schools.

However, the same study stresses that only 19% of schools provide a functional location for handwashing with water and soap.[10] The value of this indicator reaches 30% in the National Hygiene Baseline Survey. The view of the school WASH practitioners participating in UNICEF's 2014 Learning from the Field session is that those handwashing stations are most often leaking and in need of repair. 15% of schools do not have any designated handwashing location at all.[11] Some schools have a basin, but they are not in useable condition due to a lack of running water, meaning they have not been cleaned for a long time. In such cases, students wash their hands at a tube-well or use drums as handwashing facilities.[14]

---

[u] One of the schools visited presented the following characteristics: 400 students enrolled in two shifts for three toilets amongst which two are dysfunctional (200:1 student-toilet ratio; filthy toilet clogged with stone and wooden materials).

Picture 9: Handwashing stations.

Left: Until the hand pump is mended, children cannot use the only outdoor tap for handwashing (Katlamaré government primary school, Gozaria, Fulchari, Gaibandha). Centre: Despite heavy use by community members beyond school hours, the outdoor handwashing station remains operational in Shaheed Monumia government secondary school, Tejgaon, Dhaka, but the soap dispenser is not replaced. Right: The brand new WASH blocks built in IPH school and college, Mohakhali, Dhaka provide a functional handwashing station with soap right next to the toilets.

c) Safe and functional water supply?

The National Hygiene Baseline Survey indicates that 80% of schools have an improved functional drinking water source. This is relatively consistent with the official statistics provided by the Directorate of Primary Education, according to which 83% of schools have a functioning water source providing potable water.[12] The WSUP/ International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease survey describes a more problematic situation: whereas 73% of all schools grant access to an improved water source, the latter is functional all year round in only one school out of two.

Monirul Alam notes that the high rate of dysfunctional water points is often due to inappropriate technology being chosen at the start of PEPD-III: whilst the No6 Hand-pump[v] has great "community management potential", it is ill suited to areas where seasonal variations can bring the level of the groundwater table further than seven to eight metres below the surface. He also identifies the theft of pump heads as a major issue, which he directly relates to the frequent absence of boundary walls.[14]

6.3.3. Proper use of school WASH facilities

Assessing toilet use is difficult, but the National Hygiene Baseline Survey estimates that less than one in two schools has improved functional toilets that are unlocked (rural: 43%, urban: 63%). A recent study carried out in BRAC secondary schools showed that in 50% of institutions surveyed, the same latrines are used by both students and teachers.[8]

---

[v] See the corresponding RWSN technical sheet available at: rural-water-supply.net/en/implementation/public-domain-handpumps/no-6-pump

Unhygienic conditions and inadequate facilities contribute to the low utilisation of WASH facilities by students.[4] Proper use of toilets also implies shifting habits with regard to anal cleansing. Persistent education and training is often needed in certain areas to ensure that the use of anal cleansing materials is abandoned.

Assessing the consistency of handwashing with soap in schools is also arduous. 35% of the 14,000 schools recently surveyed by WSUP and International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease report that, "all or almost all students wash their hands with soap before eating". The National Hygiene Baseline Survey indicates that only 28% of all observed students washed both hands during the handwashing demonstration. A senior official in the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education highlighted the success of the handwashing with soap routine he witnessed in Laos in 2012: low-cost facilities were being used, allowing 20 children at a time to wash their hands following the morning assembly. "We are only launching this, he explains, but such routines already exist in schools running the midday meal programmes."

Depending on when it is carried out, checking the cleanliness of hands can be a relevant proxy indicator to assess the extent to which handwashing with soap is occurring: the National Hygiene Baseline Survey reports that one in three students has clean hands. The significant gap observed between rural and urban schools on this indicator (31% vs. 45%) likely reflects contrasts in the surrounding natural and occupational environments (e.g. working in the fields and breeding animals).

Table 3: To what extent does WAB programming address school WASH sustaining-level bottlenecks

▶ **School WASH operation and maintenance** – beyond the efforts of WaterAid Bangladesh and its partners to establish operation and maintenance procedures for school WASH facilities, WaterAid Bangladesh's studies and advocacy are shedding light into school WASH sustainability challenges and the important gaps to bridge between access to and proper use of facilities, hygiene behaviour knowledge and practice.

▶ **Strengthening School Management Committees** – WaterAid Bangladesh and its partners are strengthening school management, raising the awareness of Committee members on the importance of school WASH and MHM, on their related responsibilities.

7. Recommendations

The recommendations formulated below build on the assessment of the school WASH subsector in Bangladesh presented in Section 6: its strengths and weaknesses, and the nature of the factors underlying key bottlenecks. The suggestions made also take into account the position occupied by WaterAid in the sector, and its current contribution towards addressing bottlenecks in school WASH. In particular, the recommendations consider the trends shown in Table 4, which are shaping the overall strategy of WaterAid Bangladesh:

Table 4: Key organisational trends informing future school WASH programming

District-wide approaches	Upcoming school WASH projects will increasingly be situated in programmes seeing WaterAid Bangladesh engage at district level and strengthening the capacity of key stakeholders from the grass roots to district levels.
Increasing focus on institutional WASH	The years to come will see WaterAid Bangladesh put greater emphasis on institutional WASH, building on the findings of the National Baseline Hygiene Survey. In this respect, gradually greater resources are likely to be made available to improve school WASH programming.
Integrated WASH-health-nutrition approaches	WaterAid Bangladesh is embracing WaterAid's global trend towards the integration of WASH, health and nutrition. WASB demonstrated its capacity to foster significant WASH-health linkages, and school-based interventions provide much scope for such integration.
Support to Government	Policy influencing (e.g. advocacy on policy gaps, demonstration of models, sector performance monitoring) remains a top priority for WaterAid Bangladesh, whose role is to be a strong ally for the Government, whilst maintaining independence and the capacity to challenge the status quo.
Rights-based approaches	The work carried out by WaterAid Bangladesh is increasingly framed under rights frameworks, such as child rights or the Human Right to Water and Sanitation.

The recommendations emerging from this study are structured as follows:

i) **Recommendations on how to further influence the enabling environment** through advocacy work, in collaboration with existing partners and in the context of new types of partnerships.
ii) **Recommendations on how to enhance WaterAid Bangladesh's school WASH service delivery approach** on the ground.
iii) **Suggestion on how to improve WaterAid Bangladesh's school WASH programming process.**

7.1. Strategic recommendation on advocacy

The school WASH enabling environment needs strengthening, as stressed in section 6.1, and there is scope for WaterAid Bangladesh to intensify its influence on several fronts:

- Clarification, operationalisation and dissemination of policies.
- Budget advocacy, notably with regard to the operation and management of school WASH facilities.
- Sector performance monitoring, notably with regard to budget, policy enforcement, and monitoring and evaluation.
- Raising school WASH on the agenda of decision makers.

a) Help clarify, operationalise and facilitate the dissemination of school WASH policies

Push the National School WASH Standards. The finalisation, printing and dissemination of these National Standards is a top priority for the sector. WaterAid Bangladesh and partners can encourage the Government to reactivate this lengthy process, lobby for the integration of group handwashing facilities into the Standards, and provide support to facilitate the dissemination of the Standards and related training. WaterAid Bangladesh can help operationalise the standards by providing concrete guidance on how School Management Committees can fulfil their role. Both the National Hygiene Baseline Survey and the National Standards provide WaterAid Bangladesh and partners with a good opportunity to lobby for a joint Ministry of Health and Family Welfare / Ministry of Primary and Mass Education/Ministry of Education campaign on school hygiene.

Keep refining designs. WaterAid Bangladesh should keep influencing construction standards by piloting designs for school WASH facilities that meet or exceed minimum official requirements, thereby demonstrating cost-effective, inclusive and ergonomic solutions appropriate to particular contexts (e.g. hard to reach areas, schools used as shelter during emergencies).

Influence the design of PEDP-IV. Until the completion of PEPD-III in Dec 2017, WaterAid Bangladesh can advocate for addressing school WASH through a more integrated approach in PEDP-IV. In particular, it is critical that the next iteration of the programme caters for the rehabilitation of facilities, and supports capacity building for their proper operation and management. Generally speaking, WaterAid Bangladesh should try to determine which factors from their successful advocacy on hygiene could be applied to school WASH.

Assess the application of the Ministry of Education Circular. WaterAid Bangladesh can seize the opportunity of the still relatively recent Ministry of Education Circular to undertake a study acknowledging its relevance, assessing gaps in its application, and identifying obstacles and opportunities.

Support the design of open and distance learning programmes. If government efforts to promote open and distance learning in hard to reach areas are confirmed, the development of such programmes would provide WaterAid Bangladesh with an opportunity to include state-of-the-art content on school WASH-related issues (Unilever is already working on the subject). By partnering with other organisations under the Campaign for

Popular Education, WaterAid Bangladesh could probably more easily contribute towards introducing very relevant WASH-health-nutrition educational content into such programmes.

b) Advocate for increased budget allocation to school WASH

Highlight budgetary gaps for school WASH operation and maintenance. Build on the recent IRC-BRAC study to refine the appraisal of school WASH operation and management costs. Cost estimates derived from robust studies will represent strong evidence to advocate for the allocation of specific funds for school WASH operation and management. As suggested by Gawade (2014), such a study would benefit from a critical review of the provisions of SLIP funds, contingency funds, general funds and any other resources available to schools to meet their school WASH operation and management needs. Check the detailed studies recently carried out by WaterAid India.

c) Support sector performance monitoring

Supporting the Government with constructive critical insights into the performance of the school WASH subsector is admittedly a significant and potentially sensitive agenda, which WaterAid Bangladesh could share with a wider group of organisations (see below). A more moderate, and perhaps preliminary scope of work could focus on a few districts and address some of the following aspects: planning and budgeting, budget utilisation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
Several recent measures introduced by the Government would represent relevant entry points to engaging in this kind of assessment, with a view to supporting proactive moves by the Ministry of Education or the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (acknowledging the strengths of their initiatives whilst stressing gaps to address).

Ministry of Education Circular and joint Ministry of Education/ Ministry of Health and Family Welfare procedure. As noted above, WaterAid Bangladesh could support the Ministry of Education in assessing the application of their Circular of June 2015 on school WASH in selected districts. It could support the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare by reviewing the implementation of the monitoring procedure recently introduced by both Ministries to foster hygiene in secondary schools.

Review of PEPMIS. WaterAid Bangladesh can offer the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education and PEDP-III some constructive feedback on the WASH-related functions of PEPMIS once it becomes accessible online to the public. The type and quality of WASH-related data entered in PEPMIS, and the extent to which the tool supports planning, are indeed critical to fostering more needs-based planning. Reviewing PEPMIS will also presumably enrich WaterAid Bangladesh's work around the Right to Information Act.

Push for the inclusion of additional indicators. Advocate with other partners for the inclusion of indicators in the Annual School Census, measuring cleanliness and usage of WASH facilities, as well as student ratios.

Boost high-level political leadership and raise school WASH on the agenda throughout Ministries. Last but not least, there is a need to make school WASH more of a home-grown priority and less of a donor agenda. Significant progress in the level and sustainability of school WASH services will require a much stronger commitment from the Government. Raising the interest of high-level politicians and decision-makers in the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education in school WASH will probably imply framing the issue as part of a broader agenda and leveraging the influence of a wider coalition of partners. This suggestion is discussed below.

d) Strategic partnerships to wield more influence

Judging by the outstanding progress achieved by the Government on sanitation and the fast pace at which social norms have correspondingly evolved in the past decade, the cultural environment is more open than ever to undergoing comparable improvements in hygiene practices in institutional settings, notably schools. The policy environment is gradually improving, and both the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education are moving in the right direction. But the inertia of the system requires awakening through high-level leadership. A leadership capable of accelerating not only the formulation of the policies needed (e.g. strategies, guidelines) but also their enforcement, and able to catalyse a change of school WASH-related mind-sets and practices on the ground.

Fostering the emergence of such a leadership requires joint effort in the sector. Likewise, tackling the chronic coordination issues in the sub-sector (see Section 6.1.1.c) and addressing many of the above-listed advocacy objectives, some of which can politically be quite sensitive, require **WaterAid Bangladesh to join forces with other organisations. New forms of collaborations are needed with:**

1) **Organisations working on school WASH** (WSUP, Plan, BRAC…) for joint advocacy on school WASH-specific issues.

2) **Organisations working on other school-related agenda** (e.g. health, nutrition, gender, right-to-education), whereby school WASH shall be addressed as one facet of a broader agenda such as quality education or education for all. A cross-sector working group focusing on the quality of the learning environment could be established under the Campaign for Popular Education, for instance. Such a group would presumably gain influence by highlighting the importance of strengthening school governance[w] among its priorities.

In addition to developing these key relationships primarily orientated towards joint advocacy work, WaterAid Bangladesh should consider the following partnership opportunities:

- **WaterAid Bangladesh/WFP partnership**: WFP wishes to explore the possibility of partnering with WaterAid Bangladesh to address both advocacy and service delivery objectives in relation to the WASH component of their school feeding programme. WFP has developed excellent relationships with the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education

---

[w] The impact of most school-based interventions, including those seeking to enhance the learning environment, is conditioned to a great extent on the quality of school governance.

and a productive collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture. WaterAid Bangladesh has been strengthening its relationship with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Both organisations could gain by exploring how to leverage their respective expertise and relations with the Government to foster integrated WASH-health-nutrition interventions.

- **Partnering with the private sector**. There is arguably a need to encourage a shift from philanthropic to more strategic corporate social responsibility approaches amongst private sector actors. In particular, the author considers that NGOs should not shy away from fostering the formation of purchase habits for hygiene products and acknowledge that expanding the market for soap and detergent is a possibility. The reality, however, is that due to reputational issues and the risks of being perceived as favouring certain brands over others (and the interests of certain multinationals over local companies), NGOs are often reluctant to partner with private sector actors in a way that directly serves their commercial interest.

  There is however scope for developing partnerships compatible with NGO ethical standards and government public-private partnership (PPP) policies. An idea to explore is that of mobilising the whole soap industry to support hygiene behavioural change, and to have this industry as a whole engage in a pre-competitive public-private partnership with the Government to open the market for their products. WaterAid Bangladesh could use its partnership building expertise to facilitate a transparent process of negotiation of partnership rules guaranteeing accountability internally and towards external stakeholders. A significant increase in soap usage observed as a result of such partnership activities conducted at district level would likely foster greater and much more sustainable engagement of private actors. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, doctors and health workers could play a critical advocacy role in such a partnership, becoming the expert ambassadors of a campaign focused on promoting handwashing with soap as a health practice in schools and other institutional settings, as well as at home, without the need to refer to any particular brand.

- **Underprivileged Children's Educational Program (UCEP)/WaterAid Bangladesh partnership**. From the perspective of potential projects linking community WASH, school WASH, and WASH in the workplace, WaterAid Bangladesh could explore the possibility of partnering with UCEP. UCEP students have demonstrated a good impact as agents of change in their communities, and gained a solid reputation amongst the forum of entrepreneurs thanks to their exemplary compliance with health and safety procedures.

7.2. Strategic recommendation on service delivery

a) Improving school WASH approaches whilst strengthening the enabling environment.

Strengthening the school WASH enabling environment is a top priority. Although conditions appear favourable for WaterAid Bangladesh and its advocacy partners to awaken high-level leadership in the sector, it might take years before the whole system works in unison. Designing appropriate policies, clarifying roles and responsibilities, devising strategies, addressing budget issues, agreeing on coordination mechanisms, etc. will all take time. Likewise, building stakeholder capacities so that they can fulfil their duties will be time consuming. And presumably it will take even longer to reach the point where the degree of

policy enforcement and stakeholder accountability is satisfying. Even then, it is important to recognise that an enabling environment for school WASH may not provide a full guarantee of success at school level.

Until the system is really supportive (good planning, financial support for the development of infrastructure, operation and maintenance, hygiene education by teachers, coordination with the Ministry of Health), it is important to design better programmes capable of genuine engagement and leadership by local level stakeholders.

b) Building on existing practices

WaterAid Bangladesh can keep improving its current school WASH approach, giving more emphasis to the school component of its community WASH interventions, and borrowing from the state-of-the-art practices published by UNICEF and discussed on the UNICEF-led school WASH network. The rights-based perspective WaterAid Bangladesh adds to school WASH programming is very helpful, particularly when the community is also engaged, as is generally the case in WaterAid Bangladesh interventions. This component can be made more effective by addressing in more detail human rights to water and sanitation, referring to the actual policies and norms so that school and community stakeholders can formulate their demands on this legal basis.

c) Addressing both the quality of the learning environment and school-level leadership

The central challenge however, is to develop genuine capacities and leadership amongst school stakeholders. School Management Committee members need to acquire a range of skills (e.g. technical, planning and financial skills, as well as procurement and oversight abilities), as well as autonomy. These skills need to serve a collective vision fuelled by a shared motivation: boosting school-level commitment, leadership and good school governance are equally critical.

Thus, at the very least, to be sustainable, school WASH initiatives need to be designed, packaged and sold as programmes simultaneously promoting a better learning environment and strengthening leadership, commitment and accountability amongst school and community stakeholders. As noted above, it would be relevant to frame school WASH under the quality education or education for all agenda.

However, adopting such an approach requires more time: time to properly engage all relevant local level stakeholders, to build their capacities and leadership skills (not merely through transfer of knowledge but through on-the-job training) and to gradually build their level of confidence and autonomy. It takes time to strengthen school governance and school-community linkages, just as it takes time to develop and anchor improved hygiene behaviour and an operation and maintenance routine.

Hence the need to reconsider radically the timeframe of school WASH interventions, to allow for several learning-by-doing cycles whereby School Management Committees acquire key capacities, develop and consolidate a shared vision, and nurture cohesion, trust and autonomy within the group on the basis of a series of small doable actions sequenced logically (according to the priorities of schools: e.g. a boundary wall, a second

latrine to decrease the student-to-toilet ratio, then a handwashing station, a wash block etc.).

Allow schools to improve at their own pace. Not all schools targeted by the programme can be expected to respond spontaneously with much motivation. Disparities in their pro-activeness may result from various circumstances including the quality of their leadership, their current agenda and set of priorities. Following a phase of wide mobilisation and awareness creation targeting all schools, the most proactive institutions should be accompanied first, and ongoing support should be based on merit. Successful, pioneer schools should become models to be showcased to schools lagging behind.[x]

Fundamentally, there is a need to reconcile equity concerns/principles with the value of merit-based approaches. It is important to avoid the perverse effects of the so-called demand-responsive approach, where the requirements put on schools and communities are often merely formalities, or easily achievable conditions, which do not guarantee genuine engagement and commitment. The study stresses the value of incentive systems such as reward schemes.

Address school WASH objectives as part of a broader set of goals. Interventions spanning over a long timeframe (e.g. five years) in the same schools exceed what most donors can typically afford for school WASH programmes. WASH objectives are also too narrow to trigger widespread and sustained interest amongst stakeholders. Integrated WASH-health-nutrition approaches provide a solution: success (impact, sustainability) on each dimension depends on good governance and leadership. Such integrated programmes can attract more donors and mobilise more resources, pooling funding to buy more time for building the level of commitment and governance needed.

Not only can such integrated programmes be of interest to donors, but if properly embedded in the curriculum and supporting teachers' efforts, they can trigger strong teacher buy-in and rally the – often lacking – support of district education officers. Such holistic programmes can prove instrumental to support school level and upazila primary education planning: the logically sequenced activities can be integrated in SLIPs and reflected in Upazila Education Plans (UPEPs) and allow for gradual, on-the-job capacity building. Demonstrating such holistic school-based programmes at district level requires that WaterAid Bangladesh broaden the range of its partnerships, as discussed in Section 8.1.d.

---

[x] Propagation of success through horizontal learning can be boosted by high-impact videos, featuring successful leaders and stakeholders highly supportive of the model (WaterAid Bangladesh is already planning to develop such tools with the Swayam Krishi Sangam Foundation).

7.3. Recommendations for WaterAid Bangladesh re: school WASH programming process

a) Relevant tools

Aspects of the methodology applied to this research appear relevant to a school WASH programming process. In particular, the exercises and assessments carried out during the workshop, if conducted during longer sessions to allow more in-depth analysis and exchange, may prove very relevant.

1. **Strategically mapping stakeholders** appears to be a good starting point for distinguishing key stakeholders for engaging in programmes amongst the myriad of organisations and individuals with a stake in school WASH (see Section b).
2. **Carrying out an enhanced school WASH bottleneck analysis** on the three components of the school WASH bottle analysis tool, building on existing material (such as this report, and other documents listed in the references).
3. **Prioritising issues to address** amongst the bottlenecks identified.
4. **Carrying out a power analysis** on selected issues.

b) The Golden Triangle

In this research, listing school WASH stakeholders and their respective roles and responsibilities constitutes a logical starting point towards assessing their accountability and exploring the underlying issues that explain low levels of compliance, transparency and responsiveness. But in the Bangladeshi context, as in other countries, this list proves vast and complicated to process and to use. A visualisation tool that helps to organise these stakeholders, highlighting their relative importance and relationships, can be instrumental. This study provided an opportunity to further test the relevance of the Golden Triangle, a tool designed to facilitate strategic stakeholder mapping for school WASH. This tool was introduced during the country visit to India with some success.

Referred to by several Indian informants as a practical model to focus on key dynamics at school level, the tool consists of a triangle whose sides represent parents, teachers and students. Each component requires individual attention and has its own unique needs. Each also has unique resources and contributions. If any one of these components is ignored or fails to contribute, a school system will never reach its full potential. This triangle is used by education experts to address various issues, and the country visit allowed exploring how to make use of it in the context of school WASH work. It was found again in Bangladesh that the triangle is most useful when enhanced with sphere of influences bound to each side of the triangle.

Figure 5 presents the Golden Triangle in its generic form and in its process of formation during the workshop in Gaibandha, where it was used to map school WASH stakeholders in Bangladesh. A relatively complex set of stakeholders can be organised around the teacher/School Management Committee/parents-students trio. Building commitment in these core stakeholders is most critical to achieving sustainability of school WASH programmes. This is particularly true in the absence of a very supportive enabling environment, and until each stakeholder in the complex school WASH puzzle (as illustrated on the right hand-side) effectively fulfils its responsibilities.

This visualisation tool can facilitate analysis of the respective characteristics of these core stakeholders (e.g. their roles, level of engagement, interests, constraints and resources) and mutual relationships (power, influence) in a way that may foster more creativity. It can also stimulate reflection on accountability mechanisms and the development of leadership from the grassroots to the top.

Figure 5: Golden Triangle. Generic form (left) and as developed in Gaibandha (right).

J-E Tiberghien
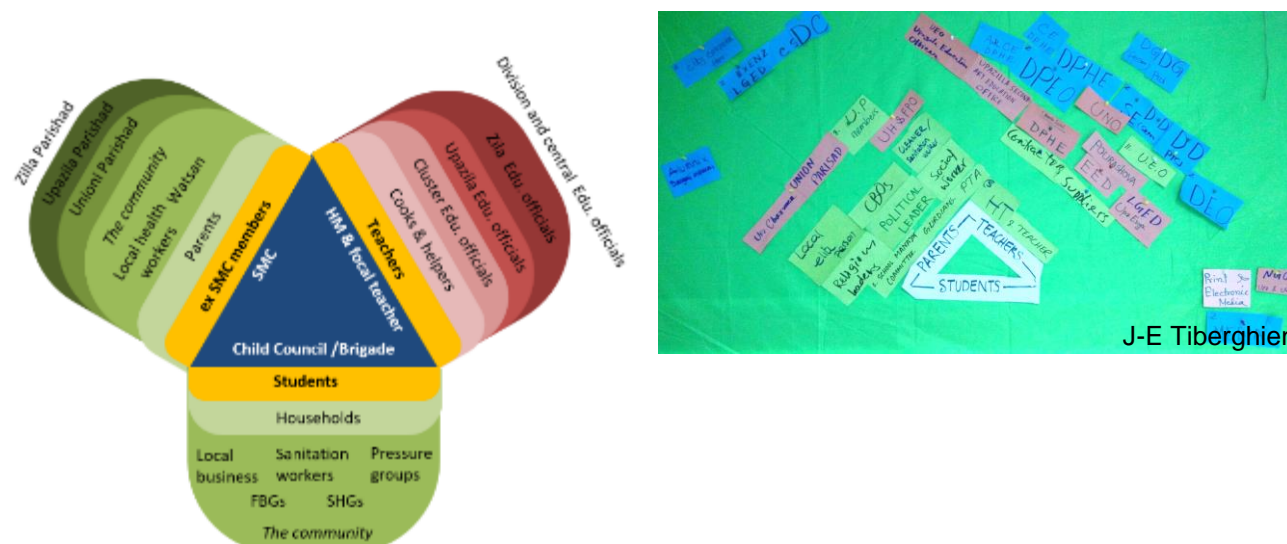
Annex A: Terms of reference

Background

These terms of reference relate to a programme of research and advocacy on school WASH, initiated by WaterAid's east Africa and south Asia regional teams. It sits in the context of WaterAid's well-established school WASH work across eight countries in the two regions,[y] and a recent grant by H&M Foundation to extend this work. It also sits in the context of WaterAid's Global Strategy, programmatic approach, district-wide approach, framework documents, country strategies and evaluations.

Aim

To set out a systematic process by which WaterAid can design and improve its strategies and approaches for school WASH.

Objectives

1.	Review and deepen existing school WASH bottleneck analysis, or in the case of countries with no such analysis undertake them. Focus on detailed description of the bottleneck analysis tool components and explanation of underlying causes of strengths and weaknesses. Explicitly include review of country monitoring system and indicators.
2.	Analyse WaterAid country programme activities, and as far as possible the work of other organisations, and the extent to which they address school WASH needs and weaknesses.
3.	In the course of the work, highlight examples of good practice and promising innovations. Also identify unsuccessful approaches that should be avoided in the interventions of WaterAid and/or other organisations.
4.	Recommend modifications to existing WaterAid school WASH strategies and approaches, based on the analyses and clearly articulated reasoning, which is harmonised across the two study regions.
5.	Recommend ways of strengthening the existing bottleneck analysis tool and make other recommendations relevant to the work.

General approach

The research will be undertaken through a combination of country-level document reviews, key informant and group interviews, stakeholder workshops and field visits in an indicative programme:

Preparation

- Development of generic themes/questions framework by stakeholder group (0.5 day).
- Document review and pre-visit planning – 2-3 days.
-

Country visits

Activity	Days
Briefing with WaterAid team and planning	1–1.5
National Key Informant interviews	1–1.5
National workshop	1
Field visits	4–5
State/provincial workshop	1
Workshop with WaterAid staff and partners	1
Reporting	2
Total	**11–13**

---

[y] In east Africa: Ethiopia, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. In south Asia: Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan

School visits – purpose

A small number (approximately 5) of visits (a) to explore bottlenecks and practices at school and community level, (b) to give legitimacy to the discussions with national and local stakeholders, and (c) to facilitate discussions with school management, students and communities. These visits are not intended to generate a body of statistically representative data, but to understand the potential challenges and opportunities viewed at that level. Schools visited should be ones that were the subject of an intervention by WaterAid at least two years ago. Selection of schools should be purposive, where possible focusing on:

- High-performing schools in the public sector.
- A mix of rural and urban, large and small.
- A mix of interventions in which (a) the entry point has been the school, and (b) the entry point has been the wider community.

Deliverables

- Draft desk report at least one week prior to the relevant country visit (in note form, taking account of existing bottleneck analysis tools, baseline and other relevant country documentation, max 5pp).
- Research protocol for each country, including:
  - o Planned itinerary, including key informants
  - o Research framework specific to the country
  - o Ssemi-structured interview guides specific to the country
- Draft country reports (four, guide length 20-25pp excluding summary and Annexes).
- Final country reports (4).

Timescale

Target completion of all final country reports 31 December 2015.

Inputs

WaterAid will provide the following:

- o Contact details of country focal person(s)
- o WaterAid general documentation, namely:
  - Global Sstrategy
  - Programmatic Approach
  - District-wide approach
  - Frameworks
  - H&M Foundation programme summary
- o All relevant country documentation, including:
  - Policy documents of Ministries of Education, Health and Water which refer to school WASH
  - Laws, guidelines and standards related to school WASH
  - Documentation of Educational Management Information Systems (EMIS) and monitoring indicators and data
  - Sector performance reports
  - School WASH plans, budgets, targets
  - WaterAid country programme evaluations
  - WaterAid country strategy papers
  - WaterAid annual reports for last three years
  - WaterAid current multi-year plan and budget
  - WaterAid school WASH research and monitoring reports
- o All in-country arrangements for meetings, field visits and workshops.

The maximum person-days per research consultant is set at 70 days.

Other requirements

The consultant is required to keep a record of time devoted to the programme, and to invoice for time spent up to the maximum days payable. Receipts must be submitted for all reimbursable expenses.

Payment milestones

- Up to ten days' fees on completion of four desk reports and research protocols.

- Up to 14 days' fees plus expenses against receipts on submission of each draft country report (total 56/70 days in up to 4-5 tranches).
- Four days on submission of final reports after one round of comments.

Country report structure

| Pages	Section	Responsibility
1	Background	RCC
1.5	WaterAid context	RCC
2	Country context	JT
0.5	Research aim and objectives	From TOR
1	Specific methodology (including limitations in each country)	JT
10	Findings in relation to enabling, developing, sustaining	JT
1	Rationale for recommendations	JT, RCC
4	Recommendations • for WaterAid country strategies • for WaterAid regional strategies • for the bottleneck analysis tool • other	JT
	Annexes • A – TOR • B – Itinerary • C – Informants/contact details • D – Reports of KI interviews, visits, workshops	JT

In addition, each country report will be supplemented by a 2–4 page easy-to-read summary illustrated with 'voices from the field', photographs and analysis.

Annex B– Itinerary

Date/ Location	Time		Task/Activity
	From	To	
Sun 17 Jan Dhaka	TBC TBC 14:00	TBC TBC 15:30	• Kickoff meeting (WaterAid Bangladesh) - introductory (objectives, planning) 1 hr max • Team wise stock taking • Meeting with Mohammad Monirul Alam, WASH Specialist UNICEF • Meeting HDRC Avijt Oddar
Mon 18 Jan Dhaka	9:30 12:00 15:00	11:00 13:30 16:30	• Meeting with Milan Kanti Barua, BRAC • Meeting with Taraqqi A Kamal, DSHE • Meeting with Humayun Kabir, DPME
Tue 19 Jan Dhaka	TBC 15:00 17:00	TBC 16:30 18:30	• Meeting with Emran Rahman, UNILEVER • Meeting with Habibur Rahman, UCEP (INGO) • Meeting with Akhil Chandra, DSK (and Rita Haldere, Razia Sultana, Rosina Akter, Monwara Begum, community mobilisers)
Wed 20 Jan Badarganj travel to Gaibandha			• Visit of secondary school, Bandargaj • Meeting with head-teacher and upazila officer for secondary education - Badarganj
Thu 21 Jan Gaibandha	9:30 16:30	16:30 18:00	• District workshop in Gaibandha • Debrief meeting for research team
Fri Gaibandha	Weekend		• Rest
Sat 23 Jan Gaibandha	9:30 10:00 14:30	10:00 14:00 16:00	• Meeting with Rezaul Haque Mondal, Project manager, SKS, Gaibandha • School visits: Jamila Akter High School, Fulchari, Gaibandha, Katlamaré government primary school co'ed, Gozaria, Fulchari, Gaibandha • Meeting with SKS team in Gozaria, Fulchari, Gaibandha,
Sun 24 Jan Dhaka	9:00 13:30	12:00 14:30	• Travel from Gaibandha to Saibdpur - Flight from Saidpur to Dhaka • Data analysis and synthesis of findings; Meeting with Rezaul Karim and Herma Majoor, WFP
Mon 25 Jan Dhaka	9:30 16:00	14:00 17:30	• Visit of two urban schools with DSK • Meeting with DPHE super-intendant engineer, focal point PDEP-III • Data analysis and drafting of preliminary findings and preparation of feedback meeting
Tue 26 Jan Dhaka	8:00 15:00	14:30 17:00	• Data analysis and drafting of preliminary findings and preparation of feedback meeting • Feedback meeting (including selected WaterAid Bangladesh staff members and selected partners if appropriate) – 2-2.5 hrs

Annex D – Miscellaneous

Typical WASH Block (the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education **(2014).** Revised environmental management framework. PEDP-III
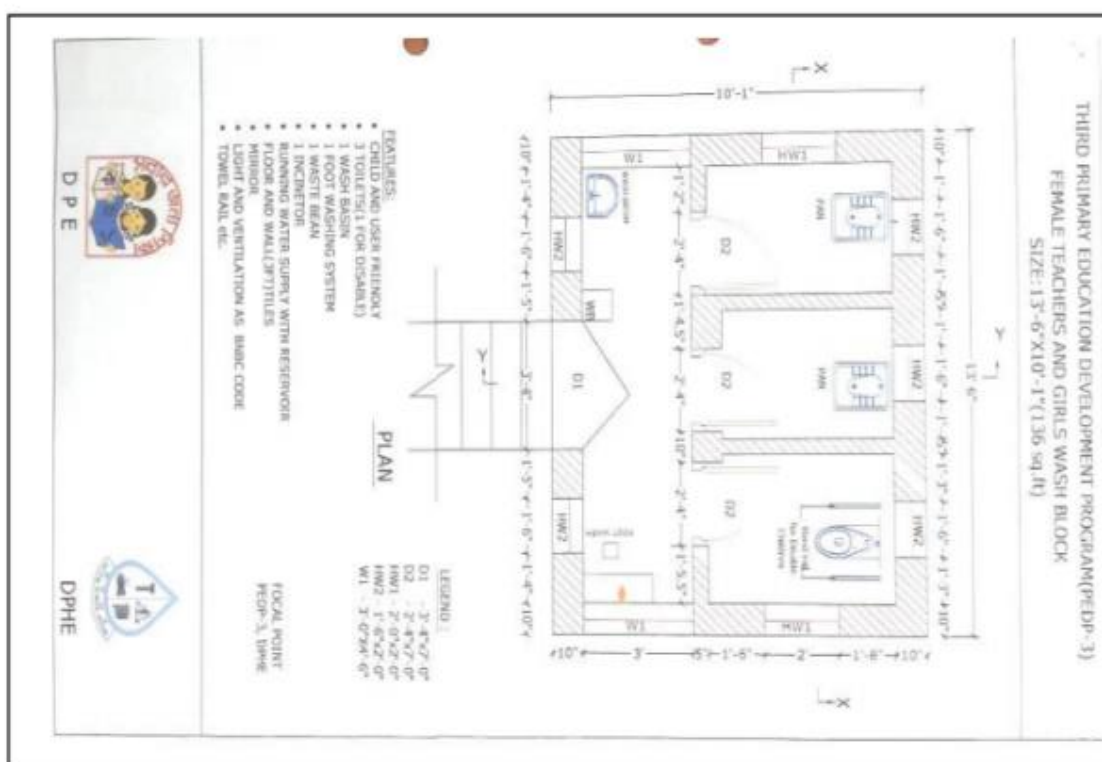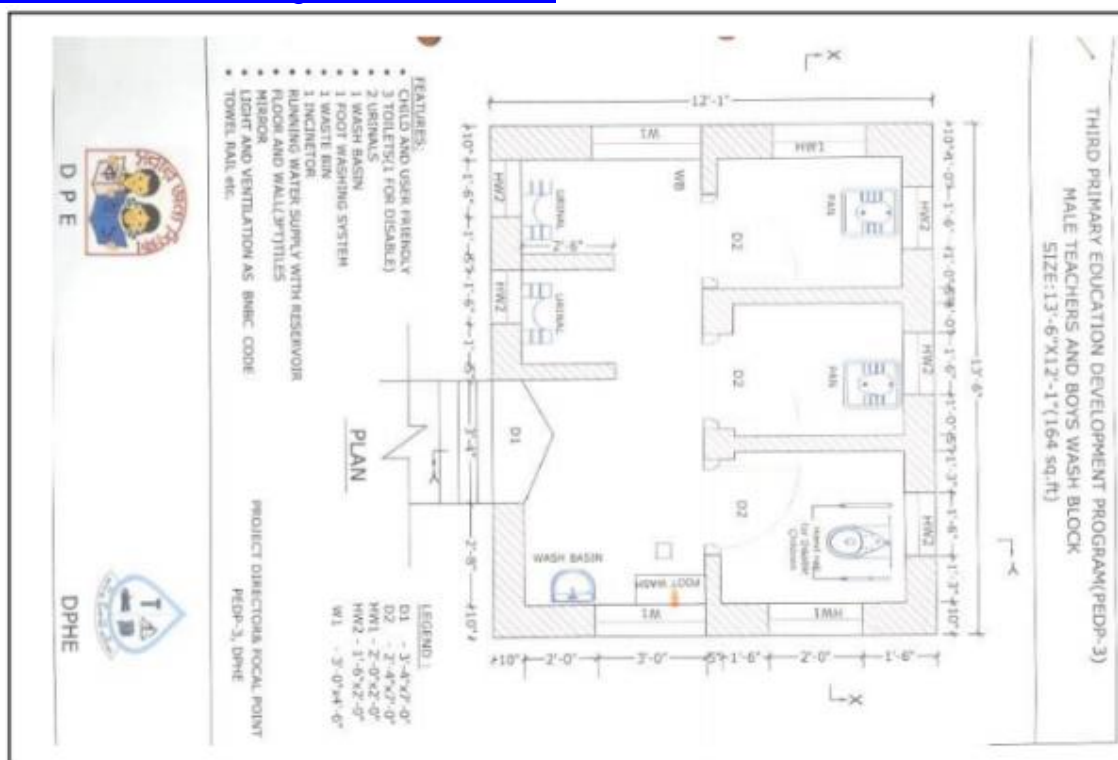
School WASH **bottleneck analysis (A. Monirul 2014)**

Domains	Determinants	Indicators	Means of Verification	Comment	Proposed Corrective actions	Score
Enabling Environment	Social norms	% of student having toilets at home	icddr,b and WAB (2014). Bangladesh National Hygiene Assessment	There is no statutory obligation on WASH facilities at home and school.	Advocacy to implement school led total sanitation	**52%**
	Legislation/ Policy	Existence of government directives on the access to WASH facilities in schools	Review of existing directives	The standards exist and indicate that the SMC and PTA are responsible to allocate budget for the maintenance but they do not stipulate minimum standards for O&M or practices	Advocacy to include minimum standards for operation and maintenance in the revised Standards, and that the SMC/PTA are responsible to ensure that maintenance is carried out.	**50%**
		Existence of national WASH in School Standards	Review of the standards for completeness and clarity of direction	Due to some errors in the Standards, these have not been printed	Develop a practical distribution plan for the Standards for officers at a national, district, local and school level; Develop and support a media campaign to create awareness of the Standards (national media, editorials etc.)	**70%**
	Budget/Expenditure	Adequacy of the government budget allocated to WASH support	Review of PEDP-III programme document and budget	Although there is an allocation for WASH in school facilities in PEDP-III, the allocation is for the construction of new facilities only. Moreover, allocation is not adequate considering the huge needs of the schools. Current allocation only caters to 30% of needs. Moreover, there is no allocation made for hygiene promotion and O&M of the WASH facilities	Advocacy to include hygiene promotion, rehabilitation and training on O&M in PEDP4) planning for PEDP4 underway)	**5%**
	Management/ Coordination	Existence of Sector wide approach (SwAp) in education sector	Review of PEDP-III programme document	Management and coordination enhanced through existence of SwAp in primary education sector. However, sometimes it becomes too bureaucratic to embrace diversity	Advocacy to embrace diversity and new ideas into the education SwAp.	**80%**
Supply	Availability of essential inputs	% of schools with a functioning water point	**DRAFT** - Annual Sector Performance Report (2013) - Monitoring and Evaluation Division, Directorate of Primary Education, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh	Water points are nonfunctional due to lack of appropriate choice of technology in PEDP-III as existing No6 Hand pumps become non-functional due to lowering of ground water below the suction limit. Water quality data (bacteriological and arsenic) are not available	Promotion of alternative technology which can yield year round water supply. Advocacy to establish water safety plan and water quality surveillance system at local level	67%
		% of schools with at least one functioning toilet		Although majority of schools have at least one functional toilet it is inadequate under the national standard. Not segregated for boys and girls and not gender sensitive	-Advocacy to PEDP-III and PEDP4 for implementation of WASH in schools' national standard	85%
		% Handwashing locations‡ with water and soap available (within the school compound)	Bangladesh National Hygiene Assessment, 2014, conducted by icddr, b for DPHE and Water Aid Bangladesh	-most of the schools do not have handwashing facilities and soap and running water available to the handwashing device. Moreover, group handwashing facilities are not on the radar screen to the PEDP2 and WASH in school national standards.	Handwashing can be promoted best through peer learning. Advocacy to GoB for incorporation of group handwashing facilities into WASH in schools national standard.	26%
	Access to adequate staffed services, facilities and information	% of education Officers and Teachers at a sub-national level have been trained on the WASH in School standards	Consultation with DPE official, review of internal report	The training has been delayed until the standards have been revised	Develop a practical Training Plan for the Standards for officers at a national, district, local and school level	**5%**
Demand	Financial access	% of schools which receive SLIP grants	**DRAFT** - Annual Sector Performance Report (2013) - Monitoring and Evaluation Division, Directorate of Primary Education, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh	Funds are disbursed but often severely delayed, or not at all; Funds are used at the discretion of the Head teachers and the SMC for all school-related costs with no monitoring of expenditures categories.		27%

	Cultural practices and beliefs	% of schools with clean and well maintained toilet facilities	icddr,b and WAB (2014). Bangladesh National Hygiene Assessment	Latrines are not clean and maintained due to lack of enough/running water inside the latrine	-Provision of running water and application of WASH in school national standard in new construction and rehabilitation of old latrines; -Involve school children in the cleaning and maintenance of sanitation facilities.	24%
		% schools with separate improved, open, accessible toilets		Latrines are not designated for boys and girls, not open during school's hours. Latrines are not accessible all year round	-Incorporation of physical accessibility issues in WASH in schools' standard -enforcement of WASH in schools' national standard for separate latrine for boys and girls with separate access and open during school's hour	8%
		Improved sources of water points appeared as clean&.		In many cases water points' surroundings are seen water logged, with feces and visible dirt immediately adjacent to the water point or platform	Support schools using water systems covered by water safety plans	36%
	Continuity of use	School annual plans have water sanitation and hygiene issues included (Observed)	icddr, b and WAB (2014). Bangladesh National Hygiene Assessment	Although WASH issues are in the school annual plan, it is not budgeted.	Advocacy to include clear budget line for WASH activities and source of funds under the school's annual plan.	41%
		Teachers reported receiving training on school sanitation and hygiene education		There is no guidance on the frequency or duration of hygiene messages and thus often not carried out	Advocacy to timetable of session on hygiene promotion (at least once a month); Scale-up School Lead Total sanitation (SLTS)	29%
Quality	Quality	% of students who practice handwashing with soap in schools (Washed hands captured by structured observation)	Icddr, b and UNICEF (2013), SHEWAB WASH in school end line survey	Actual handwashing practice after defecation is low due to lack of motivation, regular hygiene promotion, triggering and provision of facilities and soap.	Advocacy to include group handwashing facilities at schools in new PEDP 4. Children can learn together through peer motivation and link mid-day meal programme to group handwashing facilities.	26%*

- ‡Designated place at school for students to wash hands
- & No water logging, no faeces, and no visible dirt immediately adjacent to the water point or platform, observed during spot check
- *observed handwashing practices in control areas

Legend

■ Off track: 0-24%   ■ Progress with constraints 25-49%

■ Good Progress: 50-74%   ■ On track: 75-100%

References

[1] World Bank (2015), *Water, sanitation, hygiene and nutrition in Bangladesh*, available at: https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/22800/9781464806988.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y According to this report, children remain severely affected by malnutrition.

[2] SIDA (2014) *Evaluation of the reality check approach in Bangladesh.* SIDA Decentralised Evaluation. Final Report.

[3] World Bank (2013) Bangladesh education sector review seeding fertile ground: education that works for Bangladesh .

[4] UNICEF (2014) *Learning from the field.* Distance learning course – Asia.

[5] Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (2015) *Program overview and implementation guide.* PEDP-III. Revised Program Document January 2015.

[6] Gawade (2014), UNICEF *Review of WASH in schools programme (2009-2014)* available at: www.unicef.org/bangladesh/Final_Report-16Aug14.pdf

[7] Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2011) *The two-pronged approach: evaluation of Netherlands support to primary education in Bangladesh* available at: http://www.oecd.org/countries/bangladesh/49778886.pdf

[8] Snehalatha M. et al. (2015) *School WASH programmes in Bangladesh: how much does it cost? Applying the life-cycle costs approach in selected upazilas* available at: www.ircwash.org/sites/default/files/lcca_methodologyreport_school_wash_clean.pdf. The Hague: IRC and Dhaka: BRAC

[9] Campaign for Popular Education (2015) *Education watch report 2015* available at: www.campebd.org/page/Generic/0/6/18

[10] Water and Sanitation for the Urban Poor (2016) *State of the WASH facilities in rural Bangladeshi schools* PowerPoint presentation, unpublished

[11] Policy Support Unit (Government of Bangladesh), iccdr-b and WaterAid (2014) *Bangladesh national hygiene baseline survey 2014* available at: www.google.fr/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwjVnaediO3KAhWLsxQKHfiTAxMQFggjMAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.wateraid.org%2F~%2Fmedia%2FPublications%2FBangladesh-national-hygiene-baseline-survey.pdf&usg=AFQjCNHLzQxFKlTxvHKZBzuxihtaCgX1pw&sig2=_BCuOp_L8p-EPtMzhm_JmQ Preliminary report.

[12] Directorate of Primary Education (2014) *Bangladesh primary education annual sector performance report* available at: http://www.dpe.portal.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/dpe.portal.gov.bd/publications/e59c1e65_d871_446e_a5f5_3ab69fee590b/Final%20ASPR%202014.pdf

[13] UNICEF (2014) *WASH in schools factsheet.* Bangladesh country office.

[14] Monirul A (2014). *Operation and maintenance of water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in primary schools of rural Bangladesh: issues and challenges.* MSc. thesis. Water, Engineering and Development Centre, UK.

[15] Chatterley et al. (2014). *A qualitative comparative analysis of well-managed school sanitation in Bangladesh.* available at: http://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/1471-2458-14-6 BMC Public Health 2014, 14:6.

[16] Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (2016). *Bangladesh country paper.* available at: http://www.sacosanvi.gov.bd/data/frontImages/Bangladesh_Country_Paper.pdf SACOSAN VI

[17] Wikipedia (2016). *Bangladesh* available at: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bangladesh

[18] UNICEF (2016). www.unicef.org/bangladesh/wes_384.htm

[19] Ministry of Primary and Mass Education & UNESCO (2015). *Education for all national review – Bangladesh.* Available at: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002305/230507e.pdf

[20] UN Water (2013). *Bangladesh: UN Water country brief.* Available at:

www.unwater.org/fileadmin/user_upload/unwater_new/docs/Publications/BGD_pagebypage.pdf

[21] Joint Monitoring Programme (2015). *Progress on sanitation and drinking water – 2015 update and MDG assessment.* Available at: www.wssinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/resources/JMP-Update-report-2015_English.pdf

[22] ITAD (2012). *Support to civil society engagement in policy dialogue, joint evaluation: Bangladesh country report.* Available at: um.dk/en/~/media/UM/Danish-site/Documents/Danida/Resultater/Eval/2012004CSO_Bangl_AnnexI.pdf

[23] UNICEF (2012) *WASH in schools analysis and planning "bottleneck" tool.* WinS-AP GUIDANCE NOTE -Zero Draft

[24] Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (2011). *Sector development pan (FY 2011-25) water supply and sanitation sector in Bangladesh.* Available at: www.psu-wss.org/assets/book/sdpeng.pdf

[25] Moojman (2009). *Working document number 12: sanitation and hygiene in schools.* Available at: http://www.psu-wss.org/workingdocuments/12washinschools.pdf

[26] WHO and UNICEF (2009). *Water, sanitation and hygiene standards for schools in low-cost settings.*

[27] Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (date unknown). *National standards of water, sanitation and hygiene for schools in Bangladesh.*

[28] Department of Primary Education (2014). *Bangladesh Primary Education Annual Sector Performance report 2014.*

[29] Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (2015). *Program overview and implementation guide.* PEDP-III. Revised Programme Document January 2015.

[30] UNESCO (2015) *Bangladesh, pre-primary education and the school learning improvement plan: promising EFA practices in the Asia-Pacific region.* Case study. Available at: www.unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002330/233004E.pdf

[31] UNICEF and WHO (2013). *WASH in schools: from steps to strides – how an enabling environment contributes to sustainable gains.*

[32] UNICEF (2009). Open and distance learning for basic education in south Asia. Available at: http://oro.open.ac.uk/27312/1/ODL_for_Hard_to_Reach_Children_B_and_SL.pdf

[33] Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (2012). *National hygiene promotion strategy for water supply and sanitation sector in Bangladesh.* Available at: http://www.buet.ac.bd/itn/publications/sector-documents/documents/nhps.pdf

[34] Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (2014). *National strategy for water supply and sanitation.* Draft. Final available at: www.psu-wss.org/assets/book/nswss2014.pdf

[35] WASH in School Mapping (2016). *Enabling policy environment for WASH in schools.* Available at: http://washinschoolsmapping.com/projects/bangladesh.html

[36] Sanitation Updates (2016). *Bangladesh: children smash handwashing world record.* Available at: https://sanitationupdates.wordpress.com/2010/07/06/bangladesh-children-smash-handwashing-world-record/

[37] WHO and UNICEF (2013). *WASH in school: from steps to strides.* Fifth South Asian Conference on Sanitation

Kathmandu, Nepal, 22–24 October 2013.

[38] Global Alliance for Rabies Control (2016). *Little doctors teach their peers about rabies.* Available at: rabiesalliance.org/media/news/little-doctors-teach-their-peers-about-rabies

[39] Haq NM and Islam SM (2005). *Teacher motivation in Bangladesh: a situation analysis.* Available at: http://www.nazmulhaq.net/pdf/Teacher%20Motivation%20Study%20report.pdf

[40] BRAC (2016). *WASH in schools.* Available at: http://brac.net/water-sanitation-hygiene/item/826-wash-in-schools