WASH IN SCHOOLS IN FOCUS



INTRODUCTION

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) in schools, or WinS is a critical component for the safe operation of schools and pandemic preparedness, response and control. The COVID-19 pandemic forced Ministries of Education to take action and make timely delivery of WASH a reality in schools.

The WinS Network sponsored and facilitated several virtual events in 2021 with the aim to share global examples. These events included:

- A stocktaking webinar on safe school reopening and school readiness assessment
 global perspective and examples held on 28th September 2021
- > The University of North Carolina (UNC) Water and Health Conference: Science, Policy and Practice, held from 4-8th October 2021
- > The virtual 8th Wins International Learning Exchange (ILE) from 16-18th November 2021.

Links for the events can be found below.

For each ILE, participating country delegations composed of Ministries of Education, school health departments and development partners, collect, analyse and report information using the Enabling Environment (EE) matrix — an important tool for guiding assessments of WinS-related conditions within a country.



WHAT IS ...

... AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT?

An Enabling Environment is a set of interrelated sector functions that impact the capacity of governments and public and private partners to engage in the WASH service delivery development processes in a sustained and effective manner.

WASH Guidance Note, UNICEF (2016), https://uni.cf/3v8jlyk

... THE EE MATRIX?

The EE matrix sector functions are grouped and aligned with Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) building blocks as follows:

EE Matrix Sector Functions

SWA Building Blocks

POLICY AND PLANNING

SECTOR POLICY AND PLANNING

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE SECTOR BUDGETING AND FINANCING

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

PLANNING, MONITORING AND REVIEW

IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

INSTITUTIONAL **ARRANGEMENTS**

CAPACITY **DEVELOPMENT** SECTOR CAPACITY **DEVELOPMENT**

Effecting positive change in WinS performance requires a system-wide approach that tackles several sector functions. Therefore, to address problems, key functions must be assessed in relation to each

... A FOCUS ON GLOBAL EXAMPLES?

Examples of good practices from eight countries are included in this report. The country examples are presented through the lens of the Enabling Environment (EE) matrix. By illustrating the examples using the EE matrix, this publication aims to encourage Ministries of Education and development partners to realise the potential of the tool for providing guidance for system-wide WinS improvements.







COUNTRY GOOD PRACTICES



> POLICY AND PLANNING

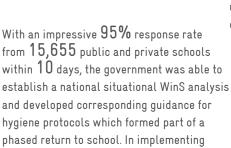
Policy guidance on WinS implementation were generally in the form of protocols, standard operating procedures (SOPs) or guidelines to ensure that children could learn in school safely during the pandemic. Often, protocols took a phased approach with instructions for before a school reopened, during the reopening process and after schools had reopened. The standard guidance supported assessments of handwashing facilities with water and soap, basic drinking water and sanitation. New directions were added for increased handwashing routines at defined times, physical distancing, mask wearing, disinfection and cleaning routines, in accordance with WHO and UNICEF's global protocols. (https://uni.cf/3bM6a0d).

Previously, converting these WinS policies and plans into practice had been a slow process, but COVID-19 pandemic triggered a heightened awareness and demand for water supply and handwashing facilities with soap in schools. Combined with the acute needs in many schools, Ministries of Education had to put these plans quickly into action. For example, Ecuador established hygiene protocols as part of the phased national plan to support safe return to school. In Solomon Islands, the WinS pandemic response was led by the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development with support from development partners such as UNICEF to reach unserved schools. Indonesia's example, as part of its collaboration with GIZ and the Hygiene and Behaviour Change Coalition (HBCC), demonstrated tangible ways ministries supported schools to expedite implementation of guidelines and compliance with hygiene protocols.

Notwithstanding the traction gained as a result of the COVID emergency, poor dissemination of guidelines, low prioritisation by school officials and low capacity within some Ministries of Education remain pervasive challenges as reported by participating ILE countries.







the plan, priority was given to rural schools without access to basic water and hygiene.

Faced with the task of bringing 4.4 million primary and secondary students safely back to over 16,000 schools in Ecuador, the Ministry of Education with support of the Ministry of Public Health and development partners (https://bit.ly/3MB9zkl) undertook online assessments of WinS facilities.



In addition, 22,000 teachers received expedited training on the implementation of national hygiene protocols prior to schools reopening¹. [1]



The situational analysis from the online assessment also underscored the huge financial gap required to ensure that all schools in Ecuador met the SDG4a targets.





Examples or best practices for safe school reopening and operations played a critical role in building the capacity and increasing the confidence of schools to comply with global recommendations and national policies on pandemic preparedness and response (PPR).

The Indonesian Ministry of Education,

Culture, Research, and Technology (MoECRT), supported by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) through the Hygiene and Behaviour Change Coalition (https://bit.ly/3w40kCW), developed a series of booklets and checklists on PPR guidelines in schools (https://bit.ly/3Pf042s).

INDONESIA IN FOCUS

POLICY AND PLANNING

These gave clear guidlance to schools on how to put the protocols into practice. They helped school managers to implement and develop PPR routines in a school setting. They were widely disseminated nationwide through various channels, including the MoECRT website, and printed copies were distributed to $5\,14$ districts as well as during training of trainers for school health programme activities.







A short orientation video on these booklets (https://bit.ly/3PiOV2h) showcased actual experiences of safe school reopening from model schools. The video was launched nationally to use during cascaded training of trainers at sub-national level.



> BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE

Given that improved WinS was an essential requirement for reopening schools, the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated to Ministries of Education the urgent need for increased budgets for construction, operation and maintenance of WASH facilities in educational establishments. In some countries, such as Indonesia and Pakistan, more flexible funding arrangements were made within existing state finance mechanisms to allow schools to spend money on WinS. In Pakistan, non-salary school budgets could be exceptionally re-programmed for operation and maintenance of WASH facilities in schools. In Indonesia, operational school funds were modified to allow schools to address their specific WASH needs. In 2022, the Philippines earmarked approximately USD 7.1 million explicitly for WASH operation and maintenance under the umbrella of a National Expenditure Plan to address the backlog of WASH facility improvements. In Bangladesh, the Directorate of Primary Education established a dedicated state budget in 2021 prioritising WinS in underserved areas.

In other cases, new financing facilities were created — as in the case of Timor Leste, Laos and Bhutan. In Bhutan, a special COVID-19 fund was established not only to cover facilities but also supplies like soap, hygiene posters and sanitary napkins. Laos established block grants for operation and maintenance of WASH facilities in schools, and the Ministry of Education requested further funding to control COVID-19. In Timor Leste the Ministry of Education created a special grant that schools could directly apply for. Pakistan's Federal Directorate of Education also developed a private sector engagement plan with P&G, Unilever and SANTEX for the provision of soap, hand sanitisers and menstrual hygiene supplies to schools.

Looking beyond the pandemic, these examples, among others shared during the ILE in 2021, showcase the need for more creative financing mechanisms and greater measures of flexibility with dedicated, ring-fenced state budget lines for WinS. To support equity objectives, budget and expenditure should prioritise the schools and groups most in need. Financial reforms must be complemented with explicit budgetary guidance for accountability and transparency in schools.



INDONESIA IN FOCUS

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE

Since the reopening protocols required basic hygiene, improved water and sanitation access, and meeting certain environmental health and cleanliness criteria, schools, education offices and local governments were able to use BOS funds more flexibly for WinS.

In addition to these regular school funds, there is additional BOS operational funding aimed at 'penggerak' schools — those which have particular sanitation and hygiene needs. These BOS funds are meant to address the needs of each school with:

- > Flexibility
- > Efectiveness to meet educational goals
- > Efficiency to attain optimal results in student learning at minimal costs
- > Accountability and transparency.

With this flexible and increased funding, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology strengthened technical assistance and monitoring to support schools to reopen. This represented a considerable investment for the country, with education accounting for 20% of overall state spending in 2021².

In March 2021, the Ministry of Education,
Youth and Sports of Timor Leste, with
support of development partners and the
Global Partnership for Education, created the
Fundu Ki'ik (small grant scheme).
Schools could directly apply to the grant

schools could directly apply to the grant scheme for funds up to USD 1,000 to improve water supply, sanitation and hygiene to support a safe learning environment and prevent COVID-19 and other diseases.



TIMOR LESTE IN FOCUS

Fundu Ki'K grant helped, for example, to repair broken facilities and provide basic water supplies. One school reported that it had running water for the first time in a decade after receiving these funds for water pump repairs!

This nationwide grant helped schools access the funds directly, and enabled them to take responsibility and find suitable local solutions³.

> MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The COVID-19 pandemic created both the need and the opportunity for countries to improve their Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), with standardised indicators and national systems for data collection and analysis. It highlighted the poor situation of WinS nationally, unveiling stark discrepancies and inequalities among schools, and called for specific WinS indicators within an existing M&E system, aligned with or even integrated into the national education management information systems (EMIS). Several countries employed online or digital tools to strengthen their WinS monitoring.

Cambodia used the real-time digital tool, KOBO Toolbox, to collect information to measure the WinS status of schools and categorise their performance using the Three Star Approach for ranking schools in accordance with the Minimum Requirement Guidelines. This approach helped data-led planning and decision-making to identify schools most in need of WASH improvements. The Federated States of Micronesia's use of the WASH app also facilitated the digital transition of WinS data collection from paper. This was particularly useful for identifying the needs of schools prior to reopening. Papua New Guinea's mWater app was used to collect data on WASH in schools, addressing the WinS information gap, as there has been no EMIS bulletin published for two years.

ILE country delegations from Laos, Philippines, Pakistan, Cambodia and Papua New Guinea reported that using the Three Star Approach (https://bit.ly/3sh7jas) for systematic monitoring of WinS, aligned to SDG definitions (https://bit.ly/3vNYWp0) had been an important tool for advocacy and prioritisation of investments in certain schools.

There are advocacy calls for improvements in the indicators within EMIS for WinS monitoring, as in the Island state of Vanuatu and in Sri Lanka. Notably, Vietnam's assessment provided important advocacy information. It calculated that at least 2.2% of the Ministry of Education's budget in Vietnam is required to address current WinS needs, as opposed to the 0.2% that is presently allocated. Likewise in the Philippines, WinS national monitoring results are published on an online dashboard, which helps to identify underserved schools for WinS facility improvements under the Department of Education's Last Mile School Programme.



National monitoring is also important for tracking progress against the WinS related SDGs (4.a, 6.1, 6.2). The WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (JMP) compiles available national data and produces national, regional and global estimates every two years to support SDG progress tracking (www.washdata.org).



In Kenya, collecting WinS information was difficult at the start of the pandemic because the national education management information system (NEMIS) had only two indicators for WASH in Schools.

These indicators provided no information on the level of service, functionality or hygiene. In many cases, this information was not collected systematically from the sub-national counties.

Therefore, the Ministry of Education's
Departments for School Health and Nutrition
and Quality Assurance, with technical support
from the Ministry of Health and Ministry of
Water, Sanitation and Irrigation, and in
collaboration with UNICEF, revised
WinS indicators so that they were
aligned with the SDGs service
ladders and could be routinely
collected as part of school census.

This required the development of a training manual for education quality assurance officers, who are the frontline staff supporting schools to collect data for NEMIS.



While not fully implemented and requiring further technical and financial resources, the M&E system exposed data gaps during the pandemic. This provided the impetus for the Ministry of Education to make revisions for more equitable WinS in Kenya 4.

> IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

Implementation arrangements are even more essential in a pandemic or emergency response situation, where there is a need to coordinate the response with multiple partners. The complexity stems from the coordination of actors within various ministries, sectors, and the different levels of engagement. The prior existence of WinS plans or coordinating bodies facilitated the arrangements for safe operation of schools. In Sri Lanka, for example, there was no WinS national committee prior to the pandemic. However, the previous work of the School Health Department (SHD) in developing a school health promotion plan, which included WASH, laid the foundations for the Emergency Education Cluster to develop interventions for COVID-19 response and control. As a result, SHD led this process under the Education Cluster for the pandemic response in Sri Lanka. Similarly, Bangladesh's national committee's prior work to revise the 'WASH in School standards' was re-purposed into developing pandemic school reopening guidelines and facilitating preparations among stakeholders.

The pandemic prevention and control measures for COVID-19 reinforced and strengthened the shift towards clarification of leadership by Ministries of Education for WinS. Even where the protocols were developed by Ministry of Health or Public Health authorities, the 2021 ILE found that Ministries of Education had demonstrated leadership and guidance to schools on the implemention of hygiene protocols. This is a promising trend and is in line with WHO's new school health regulations clarifying the leadership of the education sector for all aspects of school health supported by technical expertise of the health sector. Some countries, like Kiribati and the Philippines, are going a step further to institutionalise positions for WinS coordinators at national level and at sub-national level to provide clear direction and support implementation at school level.





India, with some 1.5 million schools, over 264 million students and close to 10 million teachers, is an example of sound WinS implementation arrangements. The Administrative Staff College in India, or ASCI, is a leading think tank supporting the Ministry of Education to 'make effective strides in improving WASH status of government schools in India'. ASCI works alongside many stakeholders 'in partnership with the Ministry of Education, several state and city governments, corporates, and national and international development agencies to bring wide-scale improvements in policy, infrastructure, practice, implementation, and WinS'.5

The Swachh Bharat Swachh Vidyalaya Abhiyan (Clean School Mission), and the Swachh Bharat Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskars (Clean School Awards), (https://bit.ly/3kCgZrV), support the implementation of Clean School or WinS policy standard operating procedures (SOPs) (https://bit.ly/3y9ucR3). The 2022 awards also include categories for COVID-19 prevention and response, operation and maintenance and behavioural change communication.



extended beyond government, as they included critical resources from development partners, research institutes and the private sector. These partners worked alongside local governments and supported

These implementation arrangements

teacher training, and provided hardware such as facilities, and software such as behavioural change communication for pandemic control.

The massive scale of operations

for safe return to schools required SOPs established by Ministry of Education and disseminated systematically to states, districts, mandals, clusters and eventually to schools in 29 states and seven territories in India.

To monitor these actions, national technical departments worked alongside local state governments and district task forces, which played a **key role** in the safe reopening of schools. Data collection, monitoring, teacher training, advocacy such as Swachhta Awareness days, and pre- and post-school opening checklists were some of the many instruments used by national government to support WinS implementation arrangements. Digital tools were used extensively to support monitoring.

> CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Delegations participating in the ILE reported that checklists, SOPs, and Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) were important tools for capacity development for WinS. Many countries developed online teacher training courses as a core intervention for the safe operation and infection prevention and control (IPC) measures. A WinS MOOC, initiated in the Philippines prior to the pandemic, has inspired the development of a MOOC on IPC in schools in Cambodia, Indonesia, and South Africa. Indonesia's Perilaku Hidup Bersih dan Sehat (PHBS or healthy hygiene habits) already existed in the curriculum, but since the COVID-19 pandemic, PHBS has been inserted in the thematic online course package for teachers. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology in Indonesia continues to explore opportunities for integrating sanitation and hygiene into educational management training. In Pakistan, WASH, IPC and climate change have been included in the national curriculum for Grades 1-5. In the long run, these tools, online training modules and curriculum content will function as significant elements for capacity development for future pandemic preparedness, control, and response in schools.

An existing UNICEF/Emory University WinS course is being modified by Emory University and GIZ and will be a globally accessible MOOC. This is an example of how global learning platforms can build human resource capacity among Ministries of Education and stakeholders. This can align course content to research, evidence and development approaches so that individual Ministries of Education can cost-effectively benefit from global best practices. This is a core function of the WinS Network and has the potential to benefit many countries. In addition to training, other interrelated systematic functions such as budgets, policy frameworks and institutional arrangements are also vital for capacity development.







Training teachers is essential for pandemic preparedness and response, but it is not enough by itself, as South Africa's experience in relation to principals' perception of readiness for school reopening demonstrates.





In addition to underlining the unequal distribution of materials and commodities between schools across the provinces, it noted the varying capacities, innovation and agency required constantly to adapt protocols in line with emerging information on pandemic control.

Self-reporting surveys of teachers' unions conducted in 2020 and 2021 in all provinces found that, in the under-resourced and rural provinces of Limpopo, Kwa Zulu Natal, and Eastern Cape, which represent 62% of schools in South Africa, principals reported that the lack of materials and commodities such as water supply, soap and face masks, influenced their perception of readiness for school reopening. 'Material' readiness was a pre-requisite for other factors such as institutional readiness (i.e., a school's ability to ensure physical distancing) or teaching readiness (i.e., curriculum guidance). In other words, principals' perception of readiness to resume classes was very much associated with the availability of materials such as soap, face masks and disinfectants and access to basic facilities such as water.

A subsequent study based on these surveys optimistically concluded that school leaders could appropriately solve contextual problems and there needed to be a continued collaboration between school administration and the districts to which they reported 6.







The initiative targets TTCs

to raise awareness and influence behavioural change within the wider community and within a short period of time, with fewer resources as other forms of in-service cascade teacher training.

This capacity support to trainee teachers includes **online training materials**. In addition to teacher training, the Nutrition and Access to Primary Education (NAPE) is supporting the construction of group handwashing facilities and pit latrines at 200 schools in some districts.

The trainee teachers will be sent to 800 teaching practice primary schools armed with knowledge about implementation of the government regulations for safe school operations during the pandemic, using and managing group handwashing facilities, and raising awareness on COVID-19 preventative measures to dispel misconceptions.





WASH in Schools Massive Open Online Courses

are large-scale capacity building measures to improve the state of WASH in Schools in the Philippines. They comprise two courses:

- > Leading WinS in Schools
- for school heads and teachers at school level
- > Accelerating WinS in Divisions
 - for division/sub-national level

In both courses, the integration of different activities encourages interaction among learners to share best practices, learn from and motivate each other.







Project of English and Filipino Club SY 2018-2019

The Leading WinS course

is designed to help school heads, teachers, and school WinS coordinators improve the quality of WinS implementation by learning about WinS policy, monitoring the programme, and planning for further improvements.

The Accelerating WinS course

helps division personnel to organize, understand their division-wide data, and plan for technical assistance on WinS programme management. (https://bit.ly/3aVnlvp)

The WinS MOOC began in 2019 through combined efforts of the Department of Education (DepEd), GIZ and SEAMEO INNOTECH.
Initially, the two courses were piloted from 2019 to 2020 in four selected regions in the Philippines. Evaluations found evidence that school heads and teachers who participated in the MOOC improved WinS implementation significantly compared to schools whose principals and teaching staff did not participate in the MOOC. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, a new course section was developed to include information on COVID-19 and relevant preventive measures. Later, the course was used and fully adopted by the Philippines' DepEd Learning Management System for teacher professional development. In 2021, the management of the MOOC was further decentralised to regional level so that it could be fully handled and managed by the Regional Course Management Team under the supervision of DepEd Central Office.



CONTINUATION NEXT PAGE





Since the launch of the WinS MOOCs in 2019 until the recently concluded course run in 2021, a total of 22,510 participants have enrolled and 10,923 successfully completed the courses (equivalent to a completion rate of 49%). The monitoring results show significant improvement in the state of WASH in Schools, attesting that the MOOC has a positive impact on the DepEd WinS Programme implementation.

MONITORING RESULTS MOOC LEADING WINS IN SCHOOLS 17 Target Divisions with 1766 Schools

1050 FOLLOW-UP

SCHOOLS WITH **BASELINE AND**

776

SCHOOLS WITHOUT

MOOC PARTICIPATION 18,4 % 11,7% BASELINE FOLLOW-UP SY 2017/2018 SY 2019/2020

274 SCHOOLS WITH MOOC PARTICIPATION 24,4% 11,7 % BASELINE FOLLOW-UP

SY 2017/2018

PROPORTION OF SCHOOLS REACHING STAR LEVEL (CRUCIAL INDICATORS FOR WinS)

SY 2019/2020

The Philippines' Department of Education is proud of its pioneering role in using online learning technology and developing the WinS MOOC, which has resulted in building the capacity of WinS focal points who will implement and advocate for WASH in Schools, making it a win-win situation for all!



> POST PANDEMIC, A CONTINUED FOCUS ON WinS:

The collective country examples provide rich learnings and underline the positive momentum demonstrated by Ministries of Education to lead WinS, and the respective public, non-governmental and private sector stakeholders to support WASH activities in schools. The COVID-19 pandemic put front and centre the needed attention for water supply, hand hygiene and sanitation. Protocols, financial investments, teacher training, and up-to-date WinS data were important factors for decision-making and programming for safe reopening and COVID-19 infection prevention and control measures.

GOING BEYOND THE PANDEMIC, THESE ARE ALL WORTHY INVESTMENTS FOR YEARS TO COME.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ASCI

BEP Basic Education Programme BOS Operational School Fund DepEd Department of Education **Enabling Environment** EMIS Education Management Information System Hygiene and Behaviour Change Coalition ILE International Learning Exchange **IPC** Infection Prevention and Control Monitoring and Evaluation M&E MoECRT Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Massive Open Online Course Nutrition and Access to Primary Education

Administrative Staff College in India

NEMIS National Education Management Information System M&0 Operation and Maintenance PHBS Perilaku Hidup Bersih dan Sehat (healthy hygiene habits) PPR Pandemic Preparedness and Response SDG Sustainable Development Goal School Health Department School Health Promotion Plan SHPP SOPs Standard Operating Procedures Sanitation and Water for All SWA Training of Trainers TSA Three Star Approach Teacher Training Colleges WASH Water, Sanitation and Hygiene WinS WASH in Schools

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