



Sustaining and Scaling School Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Plus Community Impact



Diffusion of Behaviors

In Rural Kenya Do School WASH Activities Promote Changes in Household Behaviors?

Questions

One of the purposes of the SWASH+ program in Nyanza province, Kenya is to assess whether and how school-based water, sanitation and hygiene interventions can catalyze change at the household level. School WASH may result in household level changes through children bringing home messages to parents, children carrying out WASH-related activities at home, parents coming in to schools, or other avenues. Our key questions were:

- Are households of intervention schools exposed to more WASH messages than those of control schools?
- What factors make people more likely to use Water Guard?
- Are there differences between intervention and control schools in WASH awareness and behaviors?



Research

Emory University conducted a mid-term evaluation between May and July 2008 that included assessments of school facilities and households. The main questions were whether or not households associated with intervention schools were exposed to more WASH messages than those of control schools, what factors made people more likely to use WaterGuard (WG), the water treatment solution used by the project—including socio-economics, demographics, geography, social connectedness, and messaging—and the differences between intervention and control schools in WASH awareness and behaviors.

Findings

While **awareness of WG is already high** in all communities, there are small increases in the use of WG and the concentration of chlorine remaining in water after disinfection in intervention communities (communities where there is a school intervention). However, although households in intervention communities are somewhat more likely to get messages from children, at mid-term

there is little if any difference attributable to messages being received from children. The findings do show that **wealth and maternal education are important predictors** of uptake and use. In addition, those who have heard WASH messages from radio, SWASH partners, or health personnel are more likely to use it (1.5 times greater odds).

Though modest, the **evidence of influence by children** on household uptake is important. Parental involvement in the school and demonstration effect of WASH behaviors by children or the school may be effective. Specifically, those having seen a friend, family member or neighbor use WG are more likely (2.2 times greater odds) to use it, as well as those having discussed it with a child (1.4 times greater odds).

Households of intervention schools:

- Are somewhat more likely to get messages from children
- Are influenced by teachers, school, and children (not statistically significant)
- Have parental involvement in the school, showing some evidence that demonstrations by the children or school may be effective

People are more likely to use WaterGuard if:

- They are in a key demographic group (wealth and maternal education are important predictors of uptake and use)
- They have heard WASH messages from the radio, SWASH partners, or health personnel (1.5 times greater odds)

Differences in intervention and control schools:

- Awareness of WG is already high in all school communities
- There are small increases in WG use and residual chlorine levels in intervention sites
- Households in intervention sites are somewhat more likely to get messages from children

SWASH+ is a five-year applied research project to identify, develop, and test innovative approaches to school-based water, sanitation and hygiene in Nyanza Province, Kenya. The partners that form the SWASH+ consortium are CARE, Emory University, the Great Lakes University of Kisumu, the Government of Kenya, and formerly the Kenya Water for Health Organisation (KWAHO), and Water.org. SWASH+ is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Global Water Challenge. For more information, visit www.swashplus.org.

