

Successful and Cost-effective Rural School Water and Sanitation in Cambodia

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Syvibola Oun
 National Water and Environmental
 Sanitation Advisor
 Plan Cambodia



Introduction

Plan International

- A child-centered community development organization founded more than 70 years ago
- Works with more than 3.5 million families each year

Plan Cambodia

- Began working in Cambodia in 2000
- Covers six districts (two provinces – Siem Reap and Kampong) and more than 68,000 families
- Core activities: quality basic education, child health, water and sanitation, household economic security, child participation and protection



Background

School water and sanitation in Cambodia

- 34.8% of primary and secondary schools in rural Cambodia do not have water.
- 22.4% do not have latrines.

This situation contributes to multiple adverse outcomes.

- High burden of diarrheal and skin diseases
- High drop out rate of girls when their menstruation begins (as schools lack sanitation facilities to ensure privacy)

Project scope

- Since 2004, Plan has constructed water and sanitation facilities in 88 rural primary and secondary schools.
- Target population: 232 schools in six districts with 696,000 primary and secondary students



Goal and Objectives

Goal

To improve the health status and ensure healthy living environments for children and their communities in Plan target areas.

Objectives

To ensure that primary and secondary schools:

- 1) have adequate supplies of water for drinking and other purposes;
- 2) have adequate sanitation facilities for all students; and
- 3) incorporate child-centered health and hygiene education into their curricula.



Indicators and targets

Indicator	Baseline Status	Target
Percentage of target area schools that have year-round access to sufficient quantities of water.	55%	70%
Percentage of schools that provide potable drinking water to students and faculty.	Prob. 0.0%	70%
Percentage of schools that have adequate sanitation facilities (including access for the disabled and hand washing stations).	Prob. 0.0%	70%
Percentage of schools whose water supply and sanitation facilities are adequately used, operated, and maintained	TBD (low)	70%



Summary of Methods

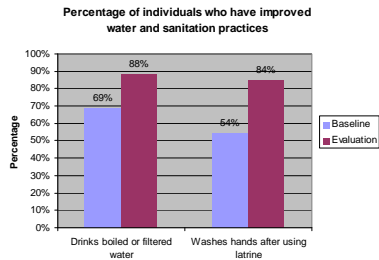
- Assessment of water and sanitation facilities in schools
- Formation of school water and sanitation committees
- Provision of clean water through well water connected to ceramic water filters
- Construction of separate toilet facilities for boys and girls, including a hand washing stall and accessibility for disabled students
- Training for students, teachers, and committee on the operation and maintenance of these water and sanitation facilities.



Results (1)

Improved practices

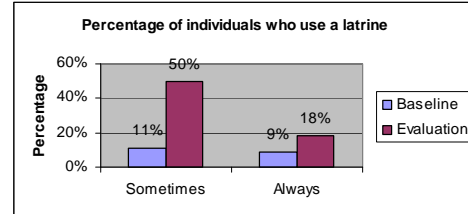
The proportion of students drinking boiled or filtered water and the proportion of students who wash their hands after using the latrine have increased.



Results (2)

Improved practices

The number of students who use a latrine has increased.



Results (3)

- 26,400 students (13,728 girls) are now benefiting from improved water and sanitation facilities in schools.
- Outcome: Students were less sick and less absent from school.**
- Water supply construction is cost-effective. Assuming a 10-year lifespan of the water supply, each student costs \$1.70 per year.



Views from Participants

"I'm happy to have clean water to drink and latrines to use in my school. My friends and I find it easy to access them at any time. It can make my health better."

-Sreng Hear, 13 years old



Keys to Success

School water and sanitation committees

- To ensure sustainability of water supply and sanitation, the capacity of these committees must be strengthened.

Separate toilets for boys and girls

- To protect privacy and ensure accessibility by all students, school latrine construction should comprise separate toilets for boy and girls and must be easily reachable to disabled students.

Water supply system spare parts

- The water supply system should be simple and spare parts should be available in the nearest market.



Conclusions

- Water and sanitation improvements in rural schools contribute significantly to decreased rates of illness among students, as well as a consequent drop in absence rates, and have been shown cost-effective.
- The government of Cambodia is analyzing the methods and results of this project for potential scale-up in the country.
- The results of this project indicate that rural school water supply and toilet construction should be scaled up to cover additional rural areas.



Thank you!

Syibola Oun
National Water and Environmental Sanitation Advisor
Plan Cambodia
syibola.oun@plan-international.org

