

Project Report for Catholic School Mbah, Kumbo, Bui Division

Prepared by:

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Carol Nowlin & Mike at C.S. Mbah

Four Thirst Relief Staff visited Cameroon in June 2009

INTRODUCTION

As part of our Thirst Relief project with school; Life and Water Development Group – Cameroon invited the school administrative of Mbah in their office in Kumbo. In the meeting they discussed about the possibilities improving the health, hygiene and sanitation, latrine and biosand filter construction for the school. The meeting was successful and LWDG-Cameroon health team, Birla Faith and Judith Asahngwa, together with the latrine builders and the sand filter technicians visited the school, where the health team formed a health and water club. This consisted of 5 pupils from each of classes 1-5. We also spent 3 days teaching these selected children about hygiene and sanitation, and the biosand filters introduced a lessons about biosand filter and how it works, although the filters were not yet in school because it was getting close to holidays, and so the children will have their filters installed first week of September when schools resumes, because their filters have been constructed waiting just the installation.

We particularly focused on activities such as hand washing and proper storage of food and water to prevent germ transmission. These children were also educated on how to care for Biosand Filters and latrines which Thirst Relief and LWDGC will donate to the school. We will also spend one final day after the Biosand Filters have been installed teaching the Health and Water club how to maintain, clean and restart the Biosand Filters. This is to teach some of ardent advantages of living in a healthy environment

AIMS/ OBJECTIVES

- Form a Health and Water Club in the school
- Teach Hygiene and Sanitation
- Encourage children to wash hand before eating and after using the toilet.
- Introducing the idea of germ transmission through hands and flies
- How germs cause diarrhea and digestive problems
- Storage of water and food to prevent germ transmission.
- Teaching children about proper use of latrines
- Introduction to the proper care and maintenance of Biosand filers.

EQUIPMENT

- Bowls, soap
- Pictures to illustrate food management and hand washing
- Song sheet
- ORT story and pictures
- List of scenarios for thumbs up and down game
- Picture of Tippy tap
- Picture of Biosand filter
- Candle, Matches, string, bottles, sticks, scissors, nails, socks
- Pictures of proper water storage

DAY 1:



Carol, Chris & Mike from TRI visited the new latrine

After arriving and being warmly greeted by the teachers at 10 o'clock in the morning and introduced ourselves. We program drew five participants from each of classes 1-5. The head teacher then gave us a beautiful class room and a handful of teachers. After singing a nice song, we asked the class to indicate those who have ever seen flies and where? Their responses were, in toilets, over uncovered food, around rotten and dirty places. It was a

good start. We then told them that flies carry germs and leaves some wherever it lands. So all food should be covered, rotten foods disposed off, cleaning their school toilet and environment, be exercised. Notably, it was emphasized that hand washing plays a vital role point as far as hygiene is concerned. Together we enumerated countless times all of us can wash hands before cooking before and after eating, after helping a baby defecate and especially after using the toilet. We then demonstrated how to wash hands and that they should always use clean water and soap. And also, that they should clean their toilets everyday and also make sure that they don't defecate on the floor of the toilet. We further explained to them that, if they poop on the floor of the toilet, or pee flies will visit it and eventually come back to their food and poop germs in food which will make them sick. We also showed them how to store water after filtering and how to keep their water covered to avoid contamination. And we also particularly emphasized that they should always throw dirt into the field or in to farms lands far from home. We equally talked to them about emptying their refuse bins everyday to avoid flies and transmission of germs to food. We demonstrated all these by using pictures, on how to cover food, wash hands, water storage and throwing away rotten food. They should always wash hands before eating and after visiting the toilet by the end of day one, the participants were very excited.

DAY 2:

It was the 6th day of May and same time maintained. With all participants present a few questions were asked to rehearse our previous lesson. The children already knew we would drill them on what a tippy tap is, produce and learn how to use it. The needed materials were assembled a scissors, nails twine, match, candle and 2 liters container and a stick. By the end of the day the children were able to make a tippy tap. Stress was made that it should be hung by the toilet and the kitchen. Failing to wash their hands when need arises will yield many negative consequences especially stomach ache and diarrhea. Oral Rehydration Therapy was described as a remedy for diarrhea. That is, getting a glass of clean water, a three finger pinch of salt and two cubes of sugar, mix it up and drink. We then told them that they should always drink four glasses four times a day. We also read to them the diarrhea story and emphasized that they should never worry when they drink and vomit, they should try to drink it more slowly. We had them tell us if they had had diarrhea before and most of the pupils said they had had it. They promised to make ORT when their kid brother or sister has diarrhea and also to show their parents at home and to take precautions in handling food, refuse, covering food and hand washing. A diarrhea song was taught to them: DIARRHEA IS NO FUN, SO FOLLOW MY ADVICE...The pupils were more confident this time and answered questions and even came in front of the class to demonstrate what they had learnt. We then used the thumbs up and thumb down to check for understanding. One pupil said he does not wash his hands after using the toilet because he did not know. He was then told to always wash his hands before eating and after visiting the toilet. When he came the next day, he proudly told us he had been washing his hand after visiting the toilet which was very good. We then said goodbye and were very much impressed about the way they answered questions.

DAY 3:

On the 3rd day we went on to another topic, Biosand Filter. We asked them the different kinds of ways to purify water and they gave us several answers like boiling to kill germs, adding alum, by sedimentation and by straining water through and clean cloth. We then introduced the Biosand filter to the class. They are later yet to be installed in the school. A theoretical lesson was handled in school. We explained what a Biosand filter is, its utilization precautions, how to clean it and chlorination. So, we told them that for a filter to work properly there must always be 2 inches of water above the sand level below the diffuser plate for the filter to work properly. And that when the flow rate no slow or when filtered water just trickles down it means the filter has been clogged with dirt. At this point, they can wash by gently removing the lid, the diffuser plate and scoop off the water. Then, they should gently fluff the sand to about two inches down and remove the water scoop off the dirty water. They should do that twice or trice depending on how dirty the filter is. With this they should filter the first bucket through and use it maybe for the tippy tap. And the second bucket they should then start to drink. And that they should make sure that they put water into the filter every day. By the end of the class, we had covered all we planned for Catholic school Mbah.

This three days workshop was a success, the hygiene and sanitation club for the school was formed with a leader. A positive remark from the head teacher Mr. Suinyuy was 'thank you for this wonderful exercise'. In the lessons, we used pictures and games to check for pupils understanding which gained us more credibility. He said to one of us "you are a very good teacher" one of the teachers said our lesson had reminded them on some aspects of personal hygiene and sanitation (domestic science) they seem to neglect these days. Compared to other schools we have visited, the participation of the head teacher and four other staff gave us some hope that in our absence there will be some follow up on their part. They will see to it that the club grows from strength to strength.

We posed a question that "who has tried to make a tippy tap at home?" one fast girl had done it so we gave her some color pencils and we promised to visit her. The visitor's book in the school can be a reference for us. It's all joy to carry these lessons, thanks to Life and Water Development Group. We then sang the diarrhea song and thanked the teachers and pupils.

HOW WILL THE SCHOOL IMPLEMENT THEIR TRAINING?

- Teachers should encourage hand washing particularly before eating.
- A time table must be made for the cleaning of latrines and ensuring proper use of latrines
- A time table should be made for getting water to filter through the sand filters. This must be done every day.
- The filters must be checked, and kept clean and hygienic.
- Teachers should encourage the Health and Water Club to pass on what they have learnt and also educate other pupils.

EVALUATION:

These kids have learned how to keep away flies not only in school but also at home. They promise to wash their hands well with clean water and soap. When next we prepare a lesson, lesson aids will be handy, frequent visits to these schools is very necessary. Life and water Development group has made them new nice toilets which they promise to take care of properly.

CONCLUSION:

The Hygiene and Sanitation Education program was a great success and I have no doubt that the Health and Water Club of Mbah Catholic School will show enthusiasm and education in carrying out these duties of maintaining and cleaning the Biosand filters and latrines, which Life and Water Development Group-Cameroon will soon install. I am sure the Health and Water Club will also do a great job of educating the other children in the school about hand washing, covering food and generally behaving in a sanitary and hygienic manner.

We are very grateful to Mbah Catholic School for receiving us so graciously and working so well during our lessons. Thank you,

Birla Faith Bongdzeem and Asahngwa Judith

Health Educators - LWDG-Cameroon