

MADAGASCAR

WASH CASE STUDIES SERIES



The Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC) is an international sector organisation that has worked since 1990 to achieve sustainable water supply and sanitation for all people, by enhancing collaboration among sector agencies and professionals.

As part of its Networking and Knowledge Management and Advocacy programmes, WSSCC encourages the development of national Water supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Coalitions. The role of the WASH Coalitions ranges from participating in information sharing to advocating specific policy changes and everything in between. Despite the variety of activities in which they participate, the WASH Coalitions have in common a commitment to addressing the need for improved systematic communication, collaboration, and joint action among sector stakeholders in their countries of operation. Most national WASH Coalitions have developed and launched WASH Campaigns as a vehicle for advocacy and awareness-raising.

WSSCC is presenting the work of the WASH Coalitions in a series of WASH Coalition country case studies. These case studies showcase the evolution, activities and impact of national WASH Coalitions. This edition focuses on **Madagascar**, where the **Diorano-WASH Coalition** has become the main sector coordination body for hygiene and sanitation promotion.

THE MADAGASCAR DIORANO-WASH COALITION: ABOUT COMMITMENT AND QUICK WINS

Throughout Madagascar only 38 percent of the population has access to safe water¹ and only 52 percent of houses are equipped with latrines². In 2005, a meagre two percent of the rural and 17 percent of the urban population had access to adequate sanitation³. Lack of sanitation and poor hygiene are responsible for much of the illness in Malagasy children. Diarrhoea has been identified as the second highest cause of death among children in Madagascar.

After the consent of the President of Madagascar, in September 2002, the Prime Minister of Madagascar officially launched the Diorano-WASH initiative in the presence of the WSSCC Chairman, various governmental officials, branch managers of UN agencies, and representatives of civil society and private sector entities. The premise of the Diorano-WASH initiative was that solely providing water supply services would not lead to substantial health improvements or poverty alleviation, without an equivalent focus on sanitation and hygiene behaviour. Therefore, a parallel consideration of the three components,



water, sanitation and hygiene, would have to be at the core of any water supply and sanitation programme. In order to achieve this, a large advocacy and awareness-raising effort was required.

The overarching aim of Diorano-WASH is to reduce poverty by addressing the issues of water supply, sanitation and hygiene, by bringing together all relevant parties in the water sector, addressing the technical, political and social aspects of water and sanitation. On the campaign side, Diorano-WASH focuses on **three key messages**:

- ▶ the importance of washing hands with soap,
- ▶ effective use of latrines,
- ▶ safeguarding the water supply between source and point of use.

Success for Diorano-WASH has been high, not in the least in that it has become the main sector coordinating body for WASH promotion and improvement in Madagascar. Notably, the Diorano-WASH Coalition has managed to decentralise, with functioning regional coalitions in 11 regions of the country. Achievements so far include the adoption of a Diorano-WASH charter and a national Diorano-WASH strategy (a new, revised strategy was developed in March 2007), linked to the Madagascar National Action Plan for poverty reduction, firmly nesting Diorano-WASH into the national sector strategies and programmes. A national campaign for sanitation education, based on the three key messages, was launched by the Minister of Health, Family Planning and Social Protection in April 2007. This national priority project will continue until 2012, covering the whole of Madagascar and reaching out to all sections of society. Other achievements have included the establishment and large spread of an “écoles amies de WASH” (WASH Schools) programme, increased awareness of sanitation techniques among school children, and increased capacity for sanitation and hygiene promotion at several levels. **This case study looks at two factors of success: the strong coalition, and the innovative sanitation and hygiene promotion and advocacy approaches that were introduced in Madagascar.**

Building the Diorano-WASH Coalition

Diorano-WASH is a platform for exchange and coordination among water, sanitation and hygiene sector actors that brings together a multitude of stakeholders, including government departments, technical and financial partner agencies (including multilaterals and bilaterals), national and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs), decentralised regional and local institutions and services, and community-based organisations (CBOs). The coalition enjoys clear leadership from the Ministry of Energy and Mines, and a positive external environment, including the support of the Malagasy President and the Prime Minister, and the support of the international community.

The Diorano-WASH Coalition is unique in that its creation filled a vacuum in the national set-up: before the coalition, the Madagascar water and sanitation sector did not have a concerted, sector-wide coordinating body. While some of the coalition members had a history of working together, this was not part of a structured sector effort, and did not necessarily involve government departments. The coalition filled this structural void, and was generally accepted by all members as a valuable initiative. This might not be so in other countries, where various sector-coordinating bodies may already exist and many sector players may be members of a variety of networks and initiatives. Though its unique role as the country’s primary water, sanitation and hygiene sector coordinating body gives the Diorano-WASH Coalition a particular advantage, there were many other factors contributing to the coalition’s success that can be replicated in other countries and settings. These factors are as follows:

A committed core

Firstly, the initial coalition contained only stakeholders who were fully committed. It was felt that those stakeholders who were less committed could have the potential to bring the spirit and functioning of the coalition down, and therefore could better be brought in later on, when the coalition was well-established and its value clear to the newcomers. This would then ensure their commitment.

A clear strategy

When created in late 2002, the first task that the coalition gave itself was to elaborate a strategy, and define a common vision and mission for all of its current and future members. The first version of the strategy, produced in June 2003, laid out the spirit, principles and underlying reasons that motivated the creation of the coalition, as well as its basic institutional and decision-making framework. In its First Annual General Assembly, the framework of this strategy was officially adopted by all members of the coalition. In 2006, influenced by new developments at the international and national level, such as the adoption of the Madagascar Action Plan, the members of Diorano-WASH embarked on a revision of the coalition’s strategy, to ensure that it maintained its relevance and appropriateness.

A transparent structure

The Diorano-WASH strategy allows for an open and transparent atmosphere and structure, and a dynamic of mutual trust, in which all members feel at ease and able to share their ideas and concerns. In this environment members discuss and decide on strategies and activities. In order to manage to coordinate and carry out activities, a simple, clear and flexible structure was devised, which includes among other elements, a Presidency, a National Committee that meets in General Assembly twice a year, various regional and technical committees, a National Coordinator, and a Secretariat.

Quick wins

The presence of a dedicated National Coordinator and Secretariat greatly aids the ability of the coalition to circulate information and to drive activities. Related to this, one major success factor for confidence-building and cementing the relationships within the coalition has been the introduction of the 'quick win' concept: relatively short, compact hygiene promotion and advocacy projects that are carried out directly by the various WASH committees, and that have a clear and concrete outcome. Examples of these 'quick win' projects have been the "Sanitation in your Neighbourhood" programme, the organisation of a Hygiene Tool Fair, and the sketches competition "Use a Latrine? Convince me!" Some of these activities are discussed further in the section on Promotion and Advocacy.

Active monitoring

The 2006 Diorano-WASH strategy was constructed along six organising principles. The first of these was 'Coordination'. Others include 'Follow-up' and 'Evaluation', which serves to ensure a better circulation of information among the coalition members and the WASH sector in general. In order to achieve this, a Monitoring and Evaluation Committee was established, tasked with following both the activities and information streams of the Diorano-WASH initiative, and of the wider sector as well. The work of the committee benefits not only the circulation of information, but also the competencies, expertise and niche of each of the members.

Acknowledgement

A last fundamental decision that the Diorano-WASH Coalition made was to consciously acknowledge and note all contributions made by members, be they monetary or non-monetary. These contributions may include making available time, expertise, human resources, meeting space, and so on.



Key success factors for the Diorano-WASH Coalition

- ▶ Start-up phase with a small core of committed members
- ▶ Active support from the political leadership
- ▶ A clear strategy that allows for concerted decision-making within the coalition
- ▶ Willingness and ability to conform to, and, where necessary, anticipate changing circumstances and situations
- ▶ A clear and flexible management and implementation structure
- ▶ Approach of 'quick wins'
- ▶ Monitoring and evaluation system
- ▶ Acknowledgement of all contributions

Promotion and Advocacy

From its inception, the Diorano-WASH initiative has been blessed with a core of members able to conceptualise and carry out creative and innovative ideas for hygiene and sanitation promotion and advocacy. Some of the programmes and projects carried out to date are detailed here:

¹ Water and Sanitation database, 2006.

² National Institute for Statistics, 2005.

³ Modern slab and washable slab - National Institute for Statistics, 2005.

SANITATION IN MY NEIGHBOURHOOD

In 2005 an estimated 3.5 million school days were lost in Madagascar due to diarrhoea and other illnesses linked to poor sanitation. This absenteeism contributes to the high Malagasy school dropout rate, with six out of ten children never finishing primary school. Schools have been identified as ideal places for sanitation education, mainly because children are generally not so fixed on their hygiene habits, and are more open to change than adults. It has also been proven that children will take the messages learned at school and share them with their families and communities. With this in mind, one innovative project undertaken by the coalition was the 2004-2005 "Sanitation in my Neighbourhood": children's views on sanitation

problems and solutions and hygiene promotion tools for teachers.

The project was based around a photo competition for school children. Each student was given a preparation pack that included a disposable camera, and was invited to participate in the contest. A professional photographer demonstrated techniques for taking photographs. Then, the children were asked to take photographs of sanitation issues in their homes and neighbourhoods. Out of the submitted photographs, an exhibition containing the best 100 photographs was displayed in the national library on World Water Day 2005.

This project was successful in raising awareness on several levels. Children and their families were

influenced by the education given to the children and their involvement in the project. The media and press coverage surrounding the World Water Day and the display in the library raised visibility and attracted members of the public that were not aware of WASH. Decision makers were also influenced by the public profile of the campaign.

WASH SCHOOLS PROGRAMME

To provide a more structured way of working with schools after the success of the initial projects such as "Sanitation in my Neighbourhood", Diorano-WASH developed the "WASH Schools programme" (Ecoles Amies de Diorano-WASH), which was given an official shape in 2007. Under this programme, a School WASH Committee is established in each school, with representation of the local tier of government, of the Parents-Teachers Association, the school Director, the students, local dignitaries, and civil society. The School WASH Committee is tasked to promote the application of the three key WASH messages, to assist the school in obtaining safe water and sanitation infrastructure and to ensure proper management of the infrastructure, and to maintain relations with the local WASH committee. The creation of a School WASH Committee is guided by a local by-law and only schools that have gone through the full process can call themselves 'WASH Schools'.

WASH COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE PROGRAMME

Following the success of the WASH Schools programme, Diorano-WASH set up a similar "programme for Community Health Centres" (CHCs). A CHC is a WASH Community Health Centre when it carries out and promotes the three key WASH messages. This concerns the behaviour of the Health Centre staff, as well as its visitors and the wider community. The Centre constitutes a place of reference for the demonstration, practice, and promotion of water, sanitation and hygiene messages. As CHCs have an important education function in the wider community, they can incite real change of hygiene behaviour in their surrounding communities. The success of this programme depends on the availability of safe and clean water and sanitation infrastructure in the CHC, and of the appropriate information, education and communication materials.

NATIONAL SANITATION EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

This campaign, again built around the three key WASH messages, was launched in April 2007 by the Minister

of Health, Family Planning and Social Protection. In the first year of this campaign, each of the three messages was the subject of attention for a four-month period. The campaign rests on four pillars: advocacy, capacity strengthening, behaviour change at the community level, and monitoring and evaluation. Implicating all major sector actors, the campaign covers all 22 regions of Madagascar, and is planned to continue until 2012.

"USE A LATRINE? CONVINCE ME!"

This project took place in 2007. Diorano-WASH is committed to using new and innovative methods to increase the population in Madagascar that is aware of the importance of positive hygiene behaviour and safe sanitation. Inspired by social marketing approaches to increase demand for sanitation, and the practice in which external people come to analyse the behaviour of communities in order to develop appropriate marketing messages for these communities, this project turned the idea around. Focusing on youths between 15 and 25, the project asked them to come up with sketches for stage or radio to convince the people in their communities of the need to use latrines. Based on the idea that they would know the people in their own communities, they would also know what might convince them best.

The youths were invited to join the project through radio announcements and via local religious groups, to ensure that not only those enrolled in school would get a chance to participate. There were three categories in which sketches were to be devised:

- ▶ convincing an elderly person to use a latrine
- ▶ convincing a person of your own age to use a latrine
- ▶ convincing a child to use a latrine

The competition was organised locally in seven regions of Madagascar, and in each region all sketches were judged, and filmed and recorded. The best three sketches of each region were announced and awarded on the 19th of November 2007, World Toilet Day, in regional events that included a number of WASH promotion activities. For each of the regions a film of the event and the sketches was produced, as well as a national compilation film and a short film aired on national television. The project will have a longer term effect: many of the youths who came together to develop and perform the sketches, have vowed to continue to play their sketches and promote the WASH messages.

For an up to date account of Diorano-WASH activities, please visit the Madagascar Country Page on the WSSCC website: www.wsscc.org

For more information on the Diorano-WASH Coalition or to get involved with the activities, please contact the Madagascar National Coordinator: Mr Jean Herivelo Rakotondrainibe | Email: herivelo2@blueline.mg

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