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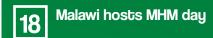




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REMARKS FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



It is with gratitude that I welcome you to the second quarter edition of the WESNET newsletter for the year 2023. Looking back from where we are coming from and where we are now as a sector, I can testify that we have achieved great milestones and we are moving towards the right direction in providing quality WASH services.

The WASH sector in Malawi has had quite a number of challenges; poor funding, high vacancy rates, vandalism of public facilities, the Cholera pandemic and the Covid-19 pandemic which have shown that a lot needs to happen if we are to have a strong WASH sector.

However, let me say that I am satisfied with the support our various partners and members continue to render to the sector post the Cholera pandemic and also the Cyclone Freddy crisis.

Let me also applaud the government for recruiting water monitoring assistants in various districts. This is a development that has just began and we are hoping to see more water monitoring assistants being hired to help in service provision in the sector.

Let me take this opportunity to also inform you that the National Water Policy was assented and that the National Sanitation and Hygiene Policy is in draft form waiting for cabinet approval. It is our hope as a sector that we will have the policy assented by the president by September this year, all things being equal.

It is also commendable that we now have a full Directorate of Sanitation, meaning that our Ministry is now complete. Our expectation is that, going forward, issues of Sanitation will equally be prioritised together with the other issues within the Ministry and that we will support this directorate to realise its full potential.

I would like also to thank all of you who took part in the commemoration of the World Menstrual Hygiene Day which took place in Mulanje district. Let us continue supporting these national events.

Enjoy the read.

Thank you.

Project constructs 72 new boreholes in Dedza



The delegation captured during the visit

BY ANGELLA KASHITIGU

onors supporting the "Improving Access to Sustainable Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Services in Dedza District project have expressed satisfaction with the headway being made after visiting two villages of Kachepa and Chafwala in Traditional Authority Kaphuka.

The project is being implemented by WeltHungerHilfe (WHH) with funding from Charity Water.

In the two communities, a new borehole was constructed, and a non-functional borehole rehabilitated respectively.

During the visit, the donors interacted with the communities, especially the Water Point Committee members who were able to demonstrate their newly acquired knowledge around borehole management as well as their ability to assemble boreholes.

This has helped them to easily operate on a borehole and carry out regular preventive maintenance.

The project is also promoting hygiene in T/A Kaphuka through the Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) approach employed to move the area to an open defecation free status.

It is being implemented in line with the Dedza District's WASH Strategic Investment Plan of 2022 – 2027.

NGOs target communities, institutions with sanitation initiatives



Some of the members of Ma Warriors Club in Blantyre

BY IMAM WALI

ygiene at community level is vital for the development of the country. In Malawi, the government and other stakeholders are making sure that this dream comes into reality as others are promoting Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) interventions at community level and in institutions.

At Nyungwe Primary School in Chiradzulu, improved WASH interventions have also seen the number of learners increasing unlike in the past according to the institution's head teacher, Charles Madeya.

He said inadequate pit latrines for both girls and boys led to high dropout rates at the school which currently has an enrolment of 949 learners.

"Sanitation issues are going on well at the school as compared to the past. Currently you have seen we have been given good toilets through the Wash for Everyone project which is being implemented by World Vision and Water for People. In the past children were leaving school because the toilets were

not good enough but the situation has improved," he said.

The school now has improved sanitation facilities including toilets and handwashing facilities which according to Madeya has reduced absenteeism due to hygiene related diseases.

A standard seven learner at the institution, Hournace Chifunga conquers with Madeya saying the experience of attending classes without proper pit latrines was chaotic.

"It was a challenge attending classes without proper toilets. Sometimes we could run to nearby bushes to relieve ourselves. This was not good as we were at risk to other hygiene related diseases," she explained, adding that the additional toilets have in many ways eased the situation.

When these learners are leaving their homes for schools or vice versa are assured that their safety is paramount. As such organisations such as Hygiene Village Project have taken the initiatives of WASH



Cashing in on waste



interventions to Traditional Authority's (TA's) Machinjiri and Kuntaja in Blantyre.

HVP is implementing a project called Increasing Access to WASH which is being financed by UNICEF and according to the organisation's Programs Officer, Ernest Maganga, the initiative targets to reach 10,000 houses in the two TA's.

"This is a project which is aimed at helping communities to climb up the sanitation ladder through a model called Sanitation Revolving Fund. The two areas were lacking in terms of sanitation facilities so this will help to improve their sanitation and conditions at house level". He said.

Maganga said they are financing through the revolving fund model as it was observed that many households have their own priorities and there was reluctance in financing or investing on household sanitation.

"This is the major problem that prompted us to bring in the concept of revolving fund and what is happening is that sanitation materials are brought to the communities where we have shop owners who are stocking and people in need of them are accessing them through a loan payable in four months," he said.

In her remarks, Christina Kabitchi, Ma Warriors Club Chairperson under group village headman, Malunga, TA Kuntaja said the improvement of sanitation at household level is playing a vital role in the performance of their children at school, a clear



One of the beneficiaries of the sanitattion project in TA Machinjiri

indication that hygiene is key to education.

"We have five clubs in the area; Tsabola, Luthunda, Kawasi, Mkombezi and Warriors. Each group has 20 members. We received flappers which we placed in our toilets and with the access to loans there is a noticeable change in terms of hygiene because even during the cholera outbreak people in these areas were not affected,

"Our children are now going to school because they are no longer victims of hygiene related diseases and are always fit to attend classes," she said.

While other stakeholders are at community and others constructing pit latrines, Water Aid in partnership with Amref and National Initiative for Civic Education (NICE) Trust have taken a great step in ensuring that learners in CBCCs are not left behind.

Deliver Life 2 Project Programs Officer, Chisomo Madula, said the program is aiming at improving the environment for learners through increased access to WASH facilities, pit latrines and boreholes construction.

"We are constructing boreholes around the CBCC's, at the same time promoting hygiene through care givers and promoters. The project has achieved a lot and in terms of our targets we have been able construct 34 boreholes and impart knowledge to caregivers", he said.

Beyond Water challenges Area Mechanics to be proactive



Area Mechanics, District Council Representatives and Beyond Water Staff at the Quarterly Review Meeting at Kamuzu Primary School, Mchinji.

BY HERBERT CHAWINGA

ountry Director for Pump Aid-Beyond Water Simon Msukwa has urged Area Mechanics who service community hand pumps, to be sharing challenges on time with right authorities, to ensure consistent supply of safe and clean water in rural communities.

Msukwa said this during the first quarterly review meeting between Beyond Water and Area Mechanics the organization works with in the Professionalized Repair and Maintenance Programme in Mchinji District.

"If a child in village dies as a result of drinking water from unsafe sources, it means you as a technician has contributed to the death of that child, because there is no justification to leaving a broken water pump unattended to, for more than 3 days, since Beyond Water offices and Hotlines are open all the time." he said.

"If we are to make remarkable strides in the supply of adequate clean water always, let us not wait for quarterly meetings to share problems that affect progress in our daily line of duty, but rather immediately act right, and make such gatherings a moment of sharing achievements and success stories in provision of quality water in communities." advised Msukwa.

In his remarks, Pump Aid-Beyond Water's Monitoring and Evaluation Manager Henderson Kadam'manja, encouraged Area Mechanics to be working closely with Water Point Committees (WPCs) and Area Development Committees (ADCs) to allow the





Women are not left behind



When a job becomes a hobby



Professionalized Repair and Maintenance model be fully embraced across communities.

"Our regular visibility as Area Mechanics and engagement with community leaders as well as Water Point Committees is key to promotion of the PRM model," We don't have to visit only when we come to fix a broken water pump." said Kadam'manja.

Benefits of Water Points signing Direct Contracts with Beyond Water, include having a community drinking water hand pump fixed by professionally trained and government certified Area mechanics within 3 Days of breakdown, quarterly servicing of the pumps and safety of funds contributed by WPCs towards the service.

In the agreement, Water Points are required to make an annual contribution of K80,000.00 to Beyond Water, where K65,000.00 goes to procurement of spare parts and K15,000.00 is the service fee for the Area Mechanic, who is also incentivized with an additional K10,000.00 by the organization, for every new Direct Contract they initiate.

Meanwhile, Beyond Water is executing the second phase of the Professionalized Repair and Maintenance mass awareness campaign, targeting communities that are yet to adopt the PRM initiative in organization's impact area of Mchinji, Dowa and Kasungu, after carrying out a similar exercise in the first quarter of its 2023 operations.

The objective of PRM is to sustain functionality of community hand pumps, increasing their reliability to over 96%.

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Evidence Action for in-line chlorination technology



A snapshot of how the Inline chlorination device is installed



Promoters are taught on how they can test water



Assembling the system



Women can now access safe clean water

BY ANGELLA PHIRI

uring the quarter, Wesnet had the opportunity to appreciate the In-line Chlorination technology which is being implemented by Evidence Action in selected districts in the country.

In-line chlorination can consistently deliver chlorine into untreated piped water systems through devices installed into a section of pipe near where the user collects water.

The water is then automatically chlorinated as it passes through the durable devices, which do not require electricity and have no moving parts.

Users receive safe, ready-to-drink water without the need to remember to treat their water or to determine the proper dose of chlorine.

Currently, the In-line Chlorination technology is being implemented in Blantyre, Mangochi and Balaka districts and according to Evidence Action, the programme will soon be scaled up to other districts as one way of helping communities access safe and ready to drink water.

The program builds on the highly successful Dispensers for Safe Water program currently being implemented in 7 districts in Malawi and the innovation has the potential to expand the number of people being reached out with safe drinking water.

Strengthening local systems through sustainable emergency response

midst the Cholera outbreak, Malawi continues to face routine challenges in the fight against the outbreak. Lack of resources and capacity being the most common. Stakeholders in the country have expressed worries on how this year's Cholera outbreak has hit the most; recording over 50,000 cases and 1,600 deaths. Consequently, the government has proposed sustainable and progressive interventions.

To ensure provision of adequate support to communities and local systems SHA/UP is working with existing local channels to support the Malawi government with sustainable interventions through provision of resources and capacity building of both local and community authorities



Ronnex is his office at Nsanje Didtrict Hospital

BY GLORIA NYIRENDA

Mr Ronnex Nguwo is the Coordinator for Integrated Disease Surveillance Response (IDSR) at Nsanje District Hospital and was among the first cohort of 15 Trainers of Training (TOT), that were trained on new innovative approaches and interventions of Cholera response called Cholera Area Targeted Intervention (CATI). CATI equips health practitioners with new Cholera case management skills and diverts from routine interventions a case which distinguishes the approach from the previous approaches.

Elaborating how CATI has been distinct, Nguwo cites a scenario where the trained team was able to establish a Cholera outbreak source after attempts by fellow officers had proven futile.

"We rushed to Sankhulani Health Centre as soon as

we got a report that they had registered a community Cholera case. Our colleagues at the health center confided in us that they had done all they could to establish the source but they were unsuccessful. We were delighted that an opportunity to put into practice the skills had availed itself, and behold; Sankhulani Health Centre was the source. We established that the patient had been a guardian at the facility at a time the facility was handling a Cholera case from Mozambique which was right way sent to Mozambique for further treatment. Therefore, at the time of contact the facility did not have Cholera patient admissions. Imagine if we were also unable to identify the source? I am therefore delighted that the training was timely and benefiting," Nguwo narrated.



SHA/UP, DHO and UNICEF team assessing Nsanje CTC premises

To ensure and promote sustainability of emergency response interventions, Our Cholera Response Project which is being funded by UNICEF is also supporting with rehabilitation of boreholes and latrines across the five districts (Nsanje, Chikwawa, Rumphi, Mzimba and Nkhatabay) we are currently working in. 11>>>



Transforming Maternal Care: Mndinda Health Center's Hygiene Success Story



Women are now able to wash clothes without any challenges

BY ULEMU MBENGWANI

In the heart of Ntchisi district, the Mndinda Health Center stands as a beacon of hope, showcasing the transformative impact of WaterAid Malawi's 150 Health Care Challenge. Nurse Midwife Technician, Estere Chaseta Kadzisake, shares her success story, highlighting the remarkable improvements in water and sanitation facilities that have revolutionized healthcare provision in her community.

Water scarcity and inadequate sanitation infrastructure plagued Mndinda Health Center, posing significant challenges to patient care. The center had a small water tank with a persistent leak, leading to water depletion by 5 pm daily. Throughout the night, the absence of water created a host of issues, exacerbating hygiene concerns and compromising patient well-being. The limited availability of buckets further exacerbated the problem, leaving them with no means to store water.

The lack of access to water had profound implications for hygiene practices, especially in the labor ward. Essential cleaning procedures, such as mopping the room and sterilizing utensils, became arduous tasks due to the water shortage. With only 2 kilograms of soap per month for the entire hospital, ensuring cleanliness became a constant challenge. The consequence was an environment rife with unpleasant odors, unwashed clothes, and compromised hygiene practices.

Tragically, the absence of proper hygiene standards resulted in a high number of sepsis cases in the labor ward between 2020 and 2021. Sterilizing utensils proved difficult, leading to three sepsis cases each month. Moreover, women referred to the district hospital for caesarean deliveries often developed sepsis due to exposure to unhygienic conditions before their transfer. Even after normal births, some women suffered from sepsis due to the lack of hygiene practices.

The dire situation forced some women to resort to washing their clothes in the river, downstream from the health center. This practice introduced clotted blood and contaminants into the water used for vegetable cultivation, raising further health concerns.





Washing hands with soap has become a norm



However, with the intervention of WaterAid Malawi as part of the 150 Health Care Challenge, Mndinda Health Center has undergone a remarkable transformation. The provision of a new water tank has resolved the water scarcity issues that plagued the facility. The tank remains full, ensuring a sufficient supply of water for bathing, cleaning, and maintaining proper hygiene throughout the day and night.

The improved bathroom facilities, including showers, have had a profound impact on the overall environment. The absence of unpleasant odors and the availability of clean and functional facilities have significantly enhanced the experience for patients and caregivers alike. Since 2022, no sepsis cases have been reported, highlighting the direct correlation between improved water access and enhanced hygiene practices.

Mndinda Health Center's success is part of a larger effort in Ntchisi district, with WaterAid Malawi supporting a total of 10 healthcare facilities in the area. The 150 Health Care Challenge aims to provide WASH facilities to 150 healthcare facilities across the



One of the newly constructed toilets

country, directly supporting 75 facilities and engaging stakeholders to support the remaining 75.

The story of Mndinda Health Center stands as a testament to the transformative power of access to clean water and improved sanitation. Through WaterAid Malawi's efforts and the dedication of healthcare professionals like Estere, communities are experiencing enhanced healthcare, improved hygiene practices, and a renewed sense of hope.

WESNET up for harmonized Wash data



A snapshot of participants at the workshop

BY DICKSON CHIVWATI GONDWE & TABU KITA KAUYE

he Water and Environmental Sanitation Network (WESNET) is optimistic that harmonizing the Malawi data on water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) can assist to improve the sector.

Program specialist for BASEflow Hector Chilimani, made the sentiments in Lilongwe on the side lines of a WASH consultation on digital library.

According to Chilimani, data management remains crucial complementing 2030 the sustainable development goal number six which advocates for availability and sustainable and management of water sanitation for all.

Said Chilimani, "We need to have



Chilimani - We are optimistic

a digital library that can trace all the WASH data and make it more accessible to people in the country for us to make better decisions."

Country Director for Pump Aid Beyond Water Simon Msukwa, said harmonizing the WASH data can provide wide response to national challenges. "We need to have a long term approach by identifying a unified way of keeping our data to adequately serve the community," Msukwa said.

The meeting also focused on the Global Water Partnership Integrated Water Resources Management (GWP IWRM) Toolbox which promotes adoption of better practices in water management.

Among others, the digital library will help to centralise, organise and make easily accessible information related to WASH.

The discussion comes at a time when lack of harmonisation of crucial data and resources related to WASH continues to hinder stakeholders in the sector to access information 'crucial' in their project implementation and reporting.

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Snapshot of activities in the quarter

Learning and Knowledge exchange workshop





s one way of promoting knowledge exchange learning among **WASH** CSO's implementing programmes in the country, Wesnet organised learning workshops for district and city

council authorities and various organisations implementing Wash programmes in all regions in Malawi. The workshops aimed strengthening the existing relationships between the organisations and also to empower

them to learn from each other on the successes, challenges and best practices in the Wash sector in their respective districts of implementation.

Clean Up exercise



joined the Ministry Water and Sanitation in the April clean up exercise which took place at Area 25 Health

Centre in Lilongwe. The event was graced by the Minister of Water and Sanitation, Honourable Abida Mia, MP and the deputy minister of Water and Sanitation Honourable

Liana Kakhobwe Chapota, MP. Various members of the private sector including Lilongwe Water Board and Central Region Water Board also patrionised this auspicious occasion which saw members from the surrounding communities coming together to make the health facility a clean and better place. The entourage was also taken through various activities that are place at the facility including gardening among others aimed at supplementing the available nutrition aspects. In November 2020, The State President Dr Lazarus Chakwera launched the clean-up campaign which is supposed to take place every second week of the month inorder to promote hygiene and sanitation in the country. 16 >> 16 | Wesnet April - June 2023







Wash policies/strategies dissemination





with the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Water and Sanitation on engaged WASH players in the Eastern Region of Malawi with the aim of providing a platform through which various WASH policies can be disseminated to district WASH stakeholders for policy guidance.

This was the first WASH policy dissemination workshop in the year 2023 and it aimed at

promoting a culture of policy sharing in the sector so that implementers are well guided in the course of their work. WESNET and the two Ministries will continue engaging other stakeholders in other regions in due course.

Some of the WASH Policies/ Strategies shared include National Sanitation Policy 2008-2013, National Environmental Policy 2017-2022, Sustainable Development Goals, Malawi Vision 2063, National Sanitation and Hygiene Strategy 2018-2024, National Health Policy 2018-2023, Water Works Act 2005. Water Resources Act 2013, National Water Policy 2008. National Healthcare Waste Management Policy 2022, National School Health and Nutrition Policy 2020, National Rural Water and Sanitation Strategic Investment Plan 2017, National WASH Financing Strategy 2023 among others.

Malawi hosts MHM day



A symbolic donation of the items

BY ANGELLA PHIRI

n May 31 2023, Wesnet and the Menstrual Hygiene Management Hub in Malawi commemorated the Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) Day which falls on 28 May every year.

The event which was commemorated under the theme "Making menstruation a normal fact of life by 2030" took place in the area of Traditional Authority Njema in Mulanje district where various menstrual hygiene related items where donated to cyclone Freddy survivors who are still residing in camps in the district.

Gracing the event, director of

sexual reproductive health in the Ministry of Health Dr Fannie Kachale said this year's theme is a call to remind all stakeholders to undertake various initiatives that will ensure that all women and girls manage their menses with dignity by 2030.

She said that government will continue committing herself to priotise and invest in menstrual health and hygiene so that dignity and sanitary kits are made available to women and girls.

Said Kachale: "Government of Malawi has included menstrual hygiene management in the design of sanitation facilities in public institutions that act as change rooms for women and girls. The Ministry of Health wants to take advantage of this commemoration to share information, challenges, lessons learnt so that there is coordinated efforts amongst stakeholders in menstrual health."

In his remarks, Wesnet Executive Director, Willies Mwandira said there is a need to break the silence on issues of menstrual hygiene and that the culture where both parents get actively involved in helping girls to appropriately manage their menstruation has to be promoted.

He, however, thanked members of the menstrual hygiene hub for the well-coordinated event citing that creating the right structures and platforms and practicing



Mwandira (R) sharing a lighter moment with Madula (L)

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collaborative behaviours will enable stakeholders to deliver on the desired goals of the Malawi Vision 2063 in regards to sanitation and hygiene.

the Representing girl child, Tereza Namizinga, a form three student at Muloza Community School Day Secondary said the devastating cyclone Freddy destroyed a lot of infrastructure that help learners to clean themselves up during menstruation and that with livelihoods being affected, most learners are not able to purchase sanitary pads.

Among the donated items were buckets, clothes, beddings, sanitary pads (both reusable and disposable) soap etc.

Organisations that made this year's event possible include: Water Aid, AHF Malawi, Supreme Pads, TinaPads, CAHESH, Self Help Africa, Grace Pads, UNICEF, World Vision Malawi, MAGGA, Red Cross Malawi, Plan International, GENET, Water for People, WHH and APHRC



Kachale graced the occassion



1. BACKGROUND

The Water and Environmental Sanitation Network is a membership based CSOs that coordinates in the work of NGOs working in the water, sanitation and hygiene subsectors in Malawi. It recognises the role of Water and Sanitation in economic development and poverty reduction. Wesnetwork got registered with Malawi Government in 2011 through Council for Non-Governmental Organisations (CONGOMA) and NGO board of Malawi. WES Network's office head office is in Lilongwe with representation across the country by its member organisations. To date the Wesnetwork has a membership of over 80 local and international NGOs across Malawi.

OUR MISSION

Sustainable access to safe water and improved sanitation for all in Malawi.

OUR MISSION

To enhance coordination, transparency, accountability, advocacy and knowledge sharing for provision of high quality standards and sustainable water and environmental sanitation services in Malawi.

2. WES NETWORK'S AREAS OF OPERATION

I. WASH NGOs COORDINATION

Facilitate linkage between NGOs (Local and international and other sector players including government, donors and other international organisations with similar objectives. This shall be achieved by working with regional and district chapters and thematic working groups (TWGs). This is done through mapping of NGOs. Development of

annual WASH NGO performance report as well as holding of joint planning and review meetings.

II. KNOWLEDGE SHARING/ LEARNING ALLIANCES

WES Network works to ensure cross cutting partnerships that enhance coordination, expertise and knowledge sharing with member organisations and stakeholders with similar objectives. The Wesnetwork also facilitates capacity building of NGOs in the WASH sector through-learning forums, workshops, trainings and exchange visits.

III. ADVOCACY AND LOBBYING

WES Network provides evidenced-based platform for its members to collectively advocate and lobby government and donors on pertinent planning, implementation, anagement, accountability, financing and policy related concerns affecting Water and environmental sanitation in Malawi. This is hieved through research, budget tracking, advocacy lobbying and citizen's actions.

IV.EFFECTIVE NETWORKING

WES Network strives to build positive and collaborative relationship between WES NGOs and other stakeholders (Government, donors, etc). It is a member of the WASH Sector Working Group (SWG), the Sanitation and Hygiene Technical Working Group (SHTWG), the National Sanitation and Hygiene Technical Committee (NSHTC), the Policy and Governance Technical Working Group and the Donor Coordination Group.



Our Profile

Through participation in these forums, the Network seeks to influence the agenda and decisions made so that they are inclusive and responsive to the issues affecting all the people, including the poor and those who are left behind

V. COMPLIANCE TO QUALITY STANDARDS

WES Network promotes adherence to high standards in provision of services among its members and the WASH service providers in line with existing government policies.

VI. RIGHTS BASED PPROACH

WES Network promotes water and sanitation rights for the poor and underprivileged through civic education, citizens' action and other rights based approaches.

ORIGIN, MANDATE AND INSTITUTIONAL SET UP OF WES NETWORK

ORGANIZATIONAL SET UP

The WES Network Secretariat has its own office independent of any Network member, and is responsible for its own financial management. It is headed by the National Coordinator who is based at the Secretariat. Diagram I below provides the organizational structure of the Network.

DIAGRAM: WES NETWORK ORGANIZATIONAL SETTING

