

Title of Article: Integrating Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WaSH) Program into Educational Institutions Policy in Nigeria.

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Abstract: The provision of safe water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in educational institutions has been established to improve health, boost educational achievement, and promote gender equity which has a positive impact on the society. However, most public secondary schools in Nigeria are short of the basic water and sanitation facilities, and hygiene education programs are often inadequate. The aim of this study is to ascertain the state of WASH program in the educational institutions. This was assessed by investigating the causes of inadequate potable water supply, poor sanitation and deficient hygiene education in public secondary schools. A total of fifteen schools were selected for the study which span across three Cities (Lagos, Abeokuta and Ota) in two States (Lagos and Ogun), in South-Western Nigeria. The standard for WASH in schools by UNICEF was used as the guiding principles to evaluate the adequacy of the various WASH components. Out of the 12 public secondary schools visited, only 3 (25%) had drinking water points (boreholes) and 40% of the schools do not have separate latrines for boys and girls. Only 1 (10%) of the schools had hand washing points but without soap. One school reported giving hygiene talk once in a term whereas there are no facilities and program in the schools for promoting safety, privacy and security of older girls. In all the schools, open dump system of solid waste disposal that are not properly managed is the general practice. This study reveals that the present WASH facilities and practices in many of the schools are not satisfactory. Therefore, to maximize the potential of students as the most persuasive advocates of good WASH practices in the society, it is necessary to integrate WASH program into national education policy and schools should be provided with adequate facilities..