

Exploring the context and opportunity for optimized school-led total sanitation program in Ethiopia: a photovoice study

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Background

Worldwide, millions of schoolchildren lack access to adequate and usable sanitation facilities, which puts them at harm of infectious diseases. **WASH** (water, sanitation, and hygiene) interventions are essential in schools because they promote a safe and healthy learning environment, reducing the spread of infectious diseases and improving attendance rates. **School-led total sanitation** (SLTS) is a participant-led approach to address open defecation and to improve sanitation practices in both schools and the catchment communities. This approach involves creating a sense of disgust and shame around open defecation, motivating schools and community members to take collective action to construct and use latrines. The results of such approaches have been mixed and under criticism. To formulate a response to these **shortcomings**, we implemented a photovoice study to explore the context and opportunities for an **optimized and contextualized SLTS**.

WASH in schools



Methodology

Research Approach

Photovoice is a research approach that allows people to discover local issues and concerns, and to subsequently explore solutions, through discussion of photos taken by the participants.



Data collection procedure

Participants were asked to capture photo's around 3 tasks related to WASH and school. Subsequently these photos were discussed in group based in the **SHOWED** principle:

- (a) what do you **See** here?
- (b) what is really **Happening** here?
- (c) how does this relate to **Our** lives?
- (d) **Why** does this problem or strength **Exist**?
- (e) what can we **Do** about it?

Study setting

The study was conducted in two public primary schools in **Jimma Town**, Ethiopia.



Participants



10 teachers



10 pupils grades 6 – 8

Results



Photo 1, Participant 8:“Along a road where people live and walk, trash is thrown there. Due to the waste containers placement next to homes, residents living near roadways may experience health problems.”

Good personal hygiene, proper toilets, and proper waste disposal have also been demonstrated, despite the identified challenges of:

- (1) Lack of access to resources
- (2) Poor quality of construction materials
- (3) poor design of infrastructure
- (4) Inadequate Wash Facilities
- (5) Insufficient knowledge on proper use



Photo 2, Participant 10:“To effectively cleanse hands, soap should be used in addition to water. Given that they are young children, there should have been written instructions on how to utilize it.”



Photo 3, Participant 1:“The presence of green area by itself will prevent people from dumping waste in this clean area”

The way to the future:

- (1) using green to raise children's awareness of environmental issues
- (2) model good behavior
- (3) playing games to unwind and enjoy
- (4) using media to expand knowledge
- (5) innovation to come up with creative solutions.

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