



WASHPaLS Research & Technical Assistance 2017-2021

The USAID Global Health Bureau’s Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Partnerships and Learning for Sustainability (WASHPaLS) seeks to improve programming approaches for delivering high-impact water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) interventions by working with USAID, national and local governments, key sector donors and implementers to broaden the evidence base on the use and effectiveness of sanitation interventions, including community-led total sanitation (CLTS), market-based sanitation (MBS), hygienic environments (i.e., safe play spaces) for infants and young children, and menstrual hygiene management (MHM) in the workplace. Four years into the project, WASHPaLS has produced a large body of extensive desk reviews, in-depth key informant interviews and field-based implementation research, and technical assistance to USAID Missions and technical bureaus. We have compiled this summary of WASHPaLS work for those who want to learn more about specific projects. This summary is updated regularly as ongoing research is updated and added.

Community-Led Total Sanitation

As guided by the findings of a comprehensive [Literature Review](#) (also available as a [Webinar](#)) and consultation with global thought-leaders, WASHPaLS implementation research related to community-led total sanitation (CLTS) focuses on two overarching themes:

- 1) An examination of whether subsidies targeted at the poorest and most vulnerable households in a community may serve to improve the sustainability and equity of sanitation gains from CLTS in Ghana is underway – a [Research Brief](#) and [Midline Report](#) are available;
- 2) WASHPaLS partnered with CLTS implementers and governments to research and better understand the range of conditions in which CLTS is most effective (the so-called “Performance Envelope”), to guide

future implementation and investment decisions by governments, donors and implementers – available outputs include a [Research Brief](#) and country-level briefs for the results of quantitative analysis of factors contributing to the success of CLTS in [Cambodia](#), [Ghana](#), [Zambia](#), [Liberia](#). Research findings are also presented in a [Manuscript](#) titled “Policy Diffusion in the Rural Sanitation Sector: Lessons from Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS).” WASHPaLS also conducted a [Landscape Assessment](#) of information communication technology (ICT) use cases in the WASH sector as an initial step toward understanding the demand and potential use for development or customization of a technology solution to support large-scale implementation and/or monitoring of CLTS programs.

Market-based Sanitation

WASHPaLS Market-based Sanitation (MBS) implementation research uses a similar [Literature Review](#) (also available in [French](#) and as a [Webinar](#)) and consultative process to identify key knowledge gaps, and focuses on two themes:

- 1) understanding the factors that impact viability of sanitation enterprises, the profile of entrepreneurs who are best suited to act as focal point of sales for customers, and the types of enterprise capital that are required to improve viability; and
- 2) understanding the changes in market rules (e.g., legislation, government policy, regulation) that can potentially improve viability of sanitation enterprises or increase toilet sales. The enterprise viability theme findings are captured in a report offering [guidance to practitioners](#); case studies from [India](#), [Cambodia](#) and [Nigeria](#); a [Webinar](#) on designing sanitation enterprises; a [Game](#) created as a learning tool for MBS practitioners; and a [Manuscript](#) titled “Global Assessment of Grant-Funded, Market- based Sanitation Development Projects.” Findings from the market rules research are summarized in this [Conference Poster](#) and are being demonstrated through technical assistance in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Liberia, described below.

Hygienic Environments

The WASHPaLS Hygienic Environments [Desk Review](#) (and [Webinar](#)) identified two under-emphasized aspects of Wagner and Lagnoux’s seminal F-diagram that are worthy of increased attention:

- 1) domestic animal excreta as an important reservoir of disease-causing agents in immediate living environments, and
- 2) exposure of infants, youth and children (IYC) to pathogens via ingestion of dirt (geophagy) and/or human and animal excreta, as well as through exploratory mouthing behaviors as a critical exposure pathway not disrupted by the traditional suite of WASH measures. Through multi-year research effort including aspects of product development, formative research, and an experimental trial, WASHPaLS seeks to understand whether a protective play space (playmat and play pen) significantly reduces exposure of IYC to harmful enteric pathogens. Research findings are captured in a final [Study Report](#) and a [Manuscript](#) titled “Exploring the Use and Appeal of Playpens to Protect Infants from Exposure to Animals, Animal

Feces, and Dirt in Rural Ethiopia.”

Technical Assistance

WASHPaLS provides short-term technical assistance to USAID missions and technical bureaus on a range of WASH themes.

Impact Evaluations

NOURISH Impact Evaluation (USAID/E3 Office of Water, October 2018 – Ongoing): USAID’s Office of Water (now USAID Office of Resilience and Food Security (RFS) Center for Water Security, Sanitation and Hygiene (CW) commissioned an impact evaluation of the Integrated Nutrition, Hygiene, and Sanitation (NOURISH) activity, to understand the effectiveness of integrated nutrition and WASH interventions. NOURISH was a five-year (June 2014 - June 2019), \$16.3M USAID project to address several Global Health Initiative and Feed the Future (FTF) priorities by focusing on the key causal factors of chronic undernutrition specific to Cambodia. [Fact Sheet](#) and [Final Report](#) available. Manuscripts pending.

Kenya RAPID Impact Evaluation (USAID/Kenya East Africa, June 2018 – Ongoing): USAID/Kenya and East Africa (USAID/KEA) requested that WASHPaLS conduct an impact evaluation of the ICT intervention portion of the Kenya Resilient Arid Lands Partnership for Integrated Development (RAPID) activity. RAPID was a five-year activity to address capacity, coordination, and communication constraints facing water access and delivery in five of Kenya’s Northern Arid and Semi-Arid Lands counties: Garissa, Isiolo, Marsabit, Turkana, and Wajir. As part of Kenya RAPID, SweetSense installed data transmitting sensors on boreholes and provided tools and training for water service providers to access and use sensor data and other support. The impact evaluation seeks to better understand whether and how such an intervention affects functionality of water points. [Baseline](#) and [Midline](#) reports are available, final report pending.

Performance Evaluations

KIWASH Mid-Term Performance Evaluation (USAID/KEA, October 2018 – March 2019): USAID/KEA commissioned WASHPaLS to undertake a mid-term

performance evaluation of Kenya Integrated Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (KIWASH), a \$51M five-year, multi-pronged activity designed to institutionalize catalytic models of sustainable service delivery for accelerated expansion of water and sanitation services and to improve complementary hygiene behaviors. The integrated nature of KIWASH's outputs are reflected in the diverse range of its activities, from technical assistance to water utilities and WASH enterprises, to Community-Led Total Sanitation and sanitation marketing, to nutrition counseling. [Final Report](#), [Summary Report](#), and [Key Findings Brief](#) are available.

W4H Performance Evaluation (USAID/Ghana, July 2019 – February 2020): USAID/Ghana commissioned WASHPaLS to conduct a performance evaluation of the Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene for Health (W4H) Activity with an emphasis on assessing sustainability of interventions. W4H was a five-year (2015–2020), US\$19M activity, the goal of which was to accelerate sustainable improvement in water and sanitation access and improve hygiene behaviors in 15 target Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies (MMDAs). [Final Report](#), [Summary Report](#) and [Key Findings Brief](#) are available.

Kenya RAPID Performance Evaluation (USAID/KEA, May – December 2020): USAID/KEA, in conjunction with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) commissioned a performance evaluation of Kenya RAPID, a US\$35.5M public-private partnership/ Global Development Alliance activity (2015–2020), funded jointly by USAID, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, private sector partners, and Millennium Water Alliance members. The program seeks to ensure sustainable and resilient livelihoods for communities, increase access to water and sanitation and access to water for livestock, and rebuild a healthy rangeland- management ecosystem in five counties: Garissa, Isiolo, Marsabit, Turkana, and Wajir. [Final Report](#), [Summary Report](#) and [Key Findings Brief](#) are available.

RANO-WASH Mid-Term Performance Evaluation (USAID/Madagascar, March – August 2021): USAID/Madagascar requested that WASHPaLS conduct a mid-term performance evaluation of the Rural Access to New Opportunities in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

(RANO-WASH) activity to assess the activity's design and implementation and thus inform any necessary mid-course corrections for the final period of implementation.

Sanitation Market Assessments

Ethiopia Decision Support Tools (USAID/Africa, October 2019 – Ongoing): The USAID Bureau for Africa requested that WASHPaLS conduct an assessment on the potential impact of reducing import tariffs and domestic taxes on the uptake of plastic sanitation products, and the cost to the Government of Ethiopia (GoE) for doing so. The request is in support of expanding the exemptions to the broader category of plastic sanitation products as a non-excludable public good. WASHPaLS will customize a Decision Support Tool (DST) for the Ethiopian context that simulates the impact of reducing the price (such as exemption from taxes and tariffs, access to foreign exchange for domestic private sector) on plastic sanitation-related products. DST outputs will present an estimate of the costs (e.g., loss in fiscal revenue) and benefits (i.e., increase in basic sanitation coverage) of lowering the price of these products, and help the GoE make an informed decision.

Kenya Rural Sanitation Market Assessment (USAID/KEA, December 2020 – Ongoing): USAID/KEA requested an assessment of the sanitation market in select counties in Kenya to inform future USAID investments in rural sanitation in Kenya. WASHPaLS will analyze the current state of the sanitation market in four counties, identified with USAID/KEA and UNICEF, by applying the MBS framework developed under WASHPaLS.

Liberia Sanitation Market Assessment (USAID/Liberia, January 2021 – Ongoing): USAID/Liberia requested an assessment of the sanitation market nationwide with deep dives in five select counties in Liberia. The objective of this assessment is to generate findings that inform future USAID investments in rural sanitation in Liberia. The primary audience for the activity is USAID/Liberia, the Government of Liberia, and its partners in the Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development .

Hygiene Research and Other Technical Assistance

Menstrual Hygiene Management Action Research (USAID/E3 GenDev & W-GDP, February 2019

– Ongoing): USAID/E3's Office of Gender and Development (GenDev) requested action research on Menstrual Hygiene Management, with additional contributions from the Women's Global Development and Prosperity (W-GDP) fund. WASHPaLS completed a review of the evidence on MHM and women's economic empowerment, with findings captured in a [Literature Review](#) and [Webinar](#). The scope of work also included workplace MHM interventions in up to four sites accompanied by an economic impact study and a parallel activity to identify and field test a set of metrics for measuring the impact of MHM on working women and their economic empowerment. The intervention activities are underway at two companies in Nepal and two companies in Kenya. A situation analysis of MHM in the workplace will be conducted in Ethiopia using a Political Economy Analysis approach.

Formative Research for Gender and Hygiene Behaviors in Mozambique (USAID/Mozambique, July 2019 – Ongoing):

USAID/Mozambique commissioned WASHPaLS to conduct applied research to generate a base of evidence for WASH behavior change and gender equity programming, which will be utilized in both the design and implementation of WASH project activities. WASHPaLS will conduct formative research on three components: decision-making for water and sanitation products and services (e.g., household connection to water system), barriers and motivations for various hygiene behaviors (e.g., handwashing, safe disposal of child feces, latrine adoption, etc.), and post-disaster recovery.

Growth through Nutrition (GtN) WASH-Nutrition Integration Assessment (USAID/Ethiopia, October 2020 - Ongoing):

USAID/Ethiopia USAID/ Ethiopia commissioned WASHPaLS to conduct a focused assessment of the integration of WASH and nutrition activities within the Growth through Nutrition Project (GtN), USAID/Ethiopia's flagship, multi-sectoral nutrition and WASH activity.

WASH and COVID Trends and Futures Analysis (USAID/

RFS/CW, June 2020 – Ongoing): USAID's RFS/CW tasked WASHPaLS with assessing the effects of the novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) on access to WASH services and products in USAID high-priority and strategy-aligned countries. The assessment sought to characterize the current state of affairs and to forecast near-term (6–18 months) trends that could assist governments, donors, and implementers prepare an informed response to the WASH-related impacts of the pandemic. WASHPaLS conducted “deep dives” in seven countries [the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Nepal, Rwanda, and Senegal] and developed an econometric model linking income changes to WASH outcomes to generate WASH outcome forecasts for the 28 USAID high-priority and strategy-aligned countries. [Synthesis Report](#) and country reports are available – [Democratic Republic of the Congo](#), [Ghana](#), [Kenya](#), [Mozambique](#), [Nepal](#), [Rwanda](#), and [Senegal](#).

Ghana WASH and COVID Trends (USAID/Ghana, October 2020 – January 2021):

Following completion of the Ghana deep dive described above, the Ghana Mission requested WASHPaLS to conduct additional research on the impacts of COVID-19 on WASH services in Ghana. The follow-on assessment focused on the operational status of small piped systems in Ghana, particularly the extent and likelihood of service disruptions, and the constraints on government institutions for tracking reimbursement needs and responding to reimbursement requests from small providers. The [Report](#) is available.

Approaches for Sanitation Access in Pastoralist Areas in Kenya (USAID/KEA, September 2020 – Ongoing):

USAID/KEA requested WASHPaLS to conduct applied research that strengthens the evidence base to inform strategies for improving access to safely managed sanitation in pastoralist areas within the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands of northern Kenya. The study will inform future USAID investments in rural sanitation and support UNICEF and the Government of Kenya in the development of context-specific rural sanitation guidance.

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