



Ethiopia



Water Supply, Sanitation, and Hygiene Promotion

Jerusalem Children and Community Development Organization (JeCCDO)




JeCCDO creates access to clean water, sanitation and hygiene services by triggering behavior change in communities in rural Ethiopia.

Launched in 2011, Not-for-profit , Menstrual Hygiene Management , Behavior Change , Women's Empowerment , East Africa: Ethiopia

Partners: WaterAid Ethiopia; Bahir Dar City Administration Water Supply, Health and Education Offices; Ura Rural Kebele Administration; religious institutions; schools and the beneficiary community at large.




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Problem Addressed

Ura Kebele is one of the peri urban kebeles (neighborhoods) included under the Bahir Dar City Administration. Lack of water supply was one of the most challenging problems in this community. More than 90% of the residents of the kebele used water from an unprotected and contaminated lake nearby. Collecting water from this source used to take up to one and one half hours for most of the households. Children, both girls and boys, spend most of their out-of-school hours collecting water from the lake. In addition, girls and women faced sexual violence when collecting the water.

Proper sanitation and hygiene were also an issue in this community; only 7.6% of the community members at Ura Kebele used an installed toilet. The prevalence of open defecation was 92.4%. Even families who had pit latrines did not use them. Community members, mainly women, reported that they rarely washed clothes and bathed due to the water shortage.

Primary schools also suffered from lack of clean water and sanitation facilities. Most of the toilets which were built during the establishment of the schools long ago fell into disrepair and neither boys nor girls had sufficient access to toilets in the schools.

Innovative Approach

JeCCDO creates long-lasting behavioral improvements in hygiene and sanitation from within the communities in which they work. They use a "shame walk" approach, where they facilitate community members to discuss how open defecation (OD) is shameful and have them walk around the community to find excrement. They make people feel ashamed about this and discuss the consequences. The community then creates a commitment to stop open defecation and use latrines.

They have their own community groups, have house visits, monitor the area, and review their progress. If something is still wrong, they have a shame walk again until awareness of the issues has triggered the community to sufficient action. JeCCDO also facilitates long term behavior change in communities by implementing WASH clubs in schools, where students discuss sanitation, hygiene, menstrual hygiene management, and how to improve these issues at their schools.

Program Solution

During JeCCDO's pilot project, the target community achieved 100% access to adequate and clean water supply. They were also able to reduce the time spent by the community, including children, in accessing clean water. Latrine coverage has also reached 100%. The burden of children in collecting water declined by 50%, according to the findings of the evaluation report. In addition, engagement of adult males in collecting water increased.

Since 2013, the community at Ura Kebele has been officially declared as a community free of open defecation by the Health Bureau of Amhara Regional Government after an intensive monitoring and verification process. JeCCDO used the "Shame Walk" approach as a strategy to promote behavior change, in which community members take an inventory of open defecation practices on each household. The occurrence of diarrheal diseases among under-five children in Ura Kebele reduced from 19% during the baseline to 0% after the project. The practice of proper solid waste disposal increased to 99% which was only 45% before the project. The hygiene and sanitation of the community was also improved through construction of communal latrines and bathrooms.

The WASH activities in schools focused on organizing students into WASH Clubs and assigning students as WASH ministers who are responsible for the water supply, sanitation & hygiene services in schools. Success factors include high commitment of community members and their leaders, genuine engagement of religious leaders, strong collaboration among government stakeholders, high level of trust to the project by the target community, strong integration of the project with the health extension program of the government, and application of innovative practices such as "Shame Walk" and WASH "Ministers in Schools".