

## SWASH+

School Water Sanitation and Hygiene Plus  
Community Impact

Photo: Sanergy

research  
noteExploring key drivers and barriers to  
private sector sanitation delivery in  
urban primary schools

Private sector



Sanitation



Schools



• **Project:** School Water Sanitation and Hygiene Plus Community Impact (SWASH+II Project)

• **Location:** Nairobi, Kenya

• **Target Population:** Primary schools

• **Implementing Partners:** CARE International, Sanergy, Kenyan Ministry of Education

• **Funders:** Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

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**Key Messages**

- Along with the Government of Kenya, SWASH+ partners will develop guidelines which outline how schools can procure, monitor, and maintain private sector sanitation delivery (PSSD).
- A qualitative research study was conducted in schools that were part of the 2015 PSSD trial to inform the development guideline recommendations.
- Key drivers and barriers in user satisfaction, financing, and consumer-provider relationships were explored in schools continuing to receive or withdrawing from PSSD after the first year of the trial.

**The Need** Safely managing sanitation in informal urban settlements is difficult, especially in schools, where facilities must be sex-segregated, hygienic, durable, and used by a large number of students. A trial of PSSD of 'dry toilets' was conducted in 20 schools in Nairobi, Kenya in 2015. Results from the first year of the trial indicated that PSSD may provide a low-cost alternative to government standard services with comparable or superior results<sup>[1]</sup>. However, the withdrawal of PSSD in five of the six public schools of the trial in the following years (2017 and 2018) indicates regulatory and financial challenges for public schools and a need to provide support and guidance to school-level decision makers, for whom such services may be suitable.

**The Study** Key informant interviews (n=37) with school representatives (e.g., head teachers, boards of management, owners, directors, caretakers, and champion teachers) were carried out in the six public and four private primary schools originally enrolled in the trial to receive PSSD. Interviews took place in July and August 2018 – roughly three years after the start of the trial. Interview questions and prompts were designed to explore the key drivers and barriers for continuing to receive or withdrawing from PSSD.

Theme	Key Drivers	Key Barriers
<p><b>User satisfaction</b> Waste removal, delivery model, and student use of private sector dry sanitation delivery</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Storing waste long-term in pit latrines is viewed as less hygienic and a health risk to students</li> <li>▪ Sewer blockages associated with flush toilets are perceived as costly and time-consuming to repair</li> <li>▪ Schools located in areas without access to sewer lines struggle to provide adequate sanitation and identify dangers to student well-being when leaving the compound to seek sanitation options</li> <li>▪ Safe and regular waste removal by a service provider reduces burden on the school</li> <li>▪ Schools identify PSSD as favorable in alleviating student queuing at latrines (and provide sex-segregation) which is viewed as a persistent challenge to a school's educational mission</li> <li>▪ Schools prefer assigning PSSD facilities to upper class girls as they are viewed to be more responsible users and would provide better accommodation and privacy during menses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The proper use of PSSD dry sanitation facilities (e.g., urine diverting, sawdust use) requires training and student behavior change (especially for newly enrolled students)</li> <li>▪ Misuse of PSSD facilities can increase the burden on toilet cleaners and/or waste collectors and negatively impact waste removal</li> <li>▪ Service providers stop waste collection when there is incorrect use</li> <li>▪ Small children require design considerations for appropriate use of sanitation facilities which might not be available from a service provider</li> <li>▪ Permitted and/or non-permitted use of PSSD facilities by visitors during weekends or long breaks may overfill storage capacity and deter student use until waste is collected</li> </ul>
<p><b>Financing</b> Funding, operation and maintenance, and paying service fees for private sector dry sanitation delivery</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Private schools show a willingness and ability to secure additional funding (e.g., NGO, fundraisers, school fees, parents) for PSSD service fees</li> <li>▪ Private schools without existing facilities prefer PSSD service fees over paying for student use of community facilities outside of the compound – considering it less costly and of greater value</li> <li>▪ Schools identify operation and maintenance of PSSD facilities as less expensive than the school's existing facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Public schools funding is limited (i.e., vote-heads from government financing) and policy prevents public schools from soliciting fees from parents – which restricts the ability to secure additional funding for PSSD service fees</li> <li>▪ Public schools have existing facilities and management perceive PSSD service fees as extra and not a priority for financial resources regardless of user satisfaction</li> <li>▪ Toilet cleaners perceive the installation of PSSD as an increase in workload and supplementary to the existing scope of work and wages</li> <li>▪ Low wages provided to toilet cleaners promotes turnover of those trained on cleaning PSSD facilities</li> <li>▪ Schools vary in determination of purchasing consumables (e.g., sawdust) for dry sanitation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Consumer-provider relationships</b> Decision making, service agreements, and communication in partnerships for private sector dry sanitation delivery</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Private schools typically have a unilateral decision making process (e.g., owner, director) which can facilitate service agreements and communication</li> <li>▪ Schools experience high volume use of toilets at select time points throughout the day. Therefore, schools report satisfaction when a service provider is responsive to requests for accommodating school class schedules by collecting waste at specific times of day, and requests for latrine repair or unscheduled waste collection when full</li> <li>▪ Schools administrators report a desire to receive high level communication from service providers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ PSSD was originally viewed as a donation in trial schools and the introduction of payment (after the first year) was not expected and negatively impacted future service agreement</li> <li>▪ Schools report incomplete knowledge about terms within the service agreement prior to signing and base understanding heavily on interpersonal interactions with service providers</li> <li>▪ Public schools have several internal oversight bodies with interconnected responsibilities (e.g., boards of management, school committee, parent organizations) which can complicate service agreements and communication</li> </ul>

**Next Steps** Current guidelines for school WASH in Kenya do not address PSSD. In the next year, SWASH+ partners and the Government of Kenya will develop guidelines, which outline how schools can procure, monitor, and maintain PSSD. Findings from this qualitative research study will be used to aid the development guideline recommendations.