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HIP HYGIENE IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT

SUCCESS STORY

SCOUTS SPREAD WASH MESSAGES

Scouts are Enthusiastic and Creative Partners for Improving Hygiene Practices



[Photo: Shahbaz Fawbush (HIP)]

Scouts perform a skit during World Water Day that explains how to treat water using a chlorine-based solution.

Where do you find thousands of talented and experienced community animators to help you spread the WASH message? In Madagascar, you go to the scouts. The USAID Hygiene Improvement Project (HIP) has formed a partnership with the scouts over the last two years. After receiving WASH training from HIP, scouts have gone on to change their own behavior and educate their families about three key WASH practices: safe storage and treatment of drinking water, safe feces disposal, and hand washing with soap. They have also engaged local communities by helping make their churches WASH-friendly and preparing skits and songs to teach neighbors about WASH practices. The scout leaders in the four regions of HIP intervention have also been trained in WASH practices, and they are in turn training all the scouts in their regions. Below are highlights of some scout WASH efforts.

World Water Day

Madam Claris, a villager with two young children, attended World Water Day ceremonies in March 2010 in the town of Mahitsy, where scouts performed several songs and sketches related to WASH practices. She said that prior to this event she did not have a good understanding of the importance of treating drinking water or how to do it. Her water source is a well and her family used to get diarrhea often from drinking untreated water. When asked what the three key WASH messages are she could recount them thanks to the sketch. “It was the most interesting part of the program,” she said. She also learned how to use tippy taps—a water-saving hand washing device—and how to wash hands with soap. “I will use Sur’Eau [a locally made chlorine-based water purification product] from now on,” Madam Claris affirmed.

Bloc Sanitaire

In the town of Mahitsy, the local scout committee helped the government carry out a study on how much revenue a public toilet, or *bloc sanitaire*, which was renovated with HIP support, could generate. Poor or corrupt management of this facility prior to HIP involvement prevented it from generating any income.



[Photo: Shahbaz Fawbush (HIP)]

Scouts educate people about WASH practices in the village Andina after a fatal outbreak of diarrheal disease.



[Photo: Shahbaz Fawbush (HIP)]

At a World Water Day event, scouts demonstrate how to use a tippy tap.

The scouts now help manage the facility and bring in revenue for the community.

Churches

In Antananarivo, scouts promote WASH-friendly churches by manning a booth next to an improved latrine at the church during services, helping explain how to use the newly installed tippy taps, and dispensing treated drinking water. As they do so, they hand out WASH literature for the churchgoers to take home.

Community involvement

When the village of Andina suffered a severe epidemic of diarrheal disease that caused the death of two children and numerous livestock, scouts from the nearby town of Ambo-sitra came, and together with the Red Cross, carried out educational activities to promote better WASH practices.

The scouts' level of involvement with WASH promotion is being codified thanks to the integration of a WASH badge into the scout's official list of 30 talent badges. To merit the WASH badge scouts have to undergo WASH training and then demonstrate that they have educated members of their community in the three key WASH practices.

Personal change

The scouts are committed to improving their lives and the lives of others in their communities, and ultimately their country. Their partnership with HIP is a tool that the scouts are using to make this goal achievable.