PA 2.4 Advancing water, sanitation and hygiene in schools

Progress report
PA 2.4 in the PoW

• (a) Support review, adaption and dissemination of available education and awareness-raising materials and implementation of pilot projects on water, sanitation and hygiene in schools, jointly with the work under programme area 3 on small-scale water supplies and sanitation;

• (b) Mainstream the work under the Protocol, in particular in implementation of the Parma Declaration on Environment and Health Regional Priority Goal 1 on access to safe water and sanitation, including provision of assistance in applying school surveys through the ENHIS platform.

Lead countries: Georgia and Hungary
Preparatory meeting

• 31 March 2014, Bonn, Germany

• Participants:
  – WHO Secretariat
  – Lead parties of PA2 (Belarus, Georgia, Hungary, Norway)
  – University Bonn (WHO Collaborating Centre)

• Key decisions:
  – Need to review current status of WASH in schools in the region (surveys, country experiences, literature)
  – Identify country needs and challenges
  – Review available guidance material
Workshop on Advancing WASH is schools

• Bonn, September 18-19, 2014
• Organized by WHO/Europe
• Support by lead parties
• Funded by Germany
• Participants:
  – 24 member states (health and educational sector)
  – Expert from academia, support/donor organizations, NGOs, UNICEF and WHO
Meeting objectives

• Kick-off activities under programme area 2.4
• Review evidence of the WASH situation in schools in the WHO European Region
• Identify best practice case studies in school regulation, surveillance and management
• Position WASH in schools as a thematic area for national target setting under the Protocol
• Appraise existing WHO/UNICEF guidance on WASH standards and identify update needs
• Identify country challenges and needs, as well as corresponding activities for further promoting WASH in schools under the Protocol.
Meeting conclusions - 1

• WASH in schools is a general concern throughout the region, though actual problems might vary

• There is an existing evidence base for linkages of WASH and health and education outcomes:
  – Issues: hydration, lead, hand hygiene, hygienic status and safety of the toilets
  – Potential end-points: learning abilities, disease incidence rate (GI), school attendance

• Global and regional policy frameworks also put emphasis on WASH in schools
Meeting conclusions - 2

- Most countries have implemented WASH in schools regulations/policies/programmes. However, often there are disparities between policy ambitions and realities.

- Factors hindering implementation were identified (mixed responsibilities, lack of awareness/taboo, survey findings not acted on, pupil perspective is lacking, financial problems etc.)
Recommendations

• WASH in school is a relevant area for all countries, target setting in the area should be supported
• Surveys or surveillance are effective in establishing baseline and identifying gaps
• Coordination on a national level is essential (targeted action plans and budgets)
• Regular surveillance is important – mechanism to include pupil’s perspective
• WASH as an entry point to an integrated approach to school health (personal hygiene, nutrition, direct health interventions
• Hygiene education should be integrated in school curricula (involve teachers)
Proposed activities under the Protocol - 1

• Update 2009 WHO/UNICEF WASH Standards for Schools in Low-cost Settings.
• Publish a landscape document on the status of WASH in schools in the region
  – WHO CC University of Bonn
  – Literature review (non-English as well)
  – Regulatory framework overview
  – Best case examples
• Develop practical tools
  – Surveillance checklist (pupils’ perspective)
  – WASH safety plans in schools
Proposed activities under the Protocol - 2

• Promote target setting in the area – advocacy document, with country examples
• Support NGO activities (e.g. Youth Coalition)
• Organize further events for exchange of experience (national and regional level)
Planned activities in 2015

• Extended lead party meeting – Budapest, April 16-17

• Meeting objectives
  – Review the landscape report
  – Scope and outline the advocacy document
  – Scope and plan practical tools
  – Establish a drafting group for document development
  – Identify linkage mechanisms to other PAs
Planned activities in 2015

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting on Advancing WASH in Schools
- Bonn, fall of 2015 (October?)
- Meeting objectives
  - Review the progress of work in the area
  - Review and finalize draft documents (landscape report, advocacy document, tools)