

Ten General Guidelines for Child Friendly School Sanitation and Hygiene Facilities

1. Child-friendly hygiene and sanitation facilities in schools are *'interactive' spaces that stimulate children's learning and development*

Age group years	Implication for design	Children's participation
2-4	The facilities for this age group should be inviting and not frightening. For younger children who are just becoming toilet trained, provide potty chairs that can easily be cleaned and that have no cracks or crevices (this is standard practice in Mongolia). Provide drawings of hand washing above the sink and use them to generate discussions. The hand washing facility should be adapted to the length of the children. An adult should accompany children at this age.	Children in this age group cannot be responsible for planning, operation and maintenance activities. Nevertheless they can help with the decoration of the facilities and playful activities could be initiated to clean the facilities or refill the water reservoir of a hand washing facility. The latter is meant to be a participatory learning activity rather than a responsibility.
5-7	Facilities should reflect the sensation of being clean: light colours, sufficient natural light and ventilation. Themes used in hygiene promotion materials can be used for decoration to strengthen the link between education and practice. Facilities should be designed in such a way that a teacher or older student can stand next to the child to teach it how to use the toilet properly. However, most children can complete simple actions or tasks on their own or with minor assistance. There is no direct need for privacy; children like to observe others and imitate their behaviours.	In this age group children could become actively involved in design, planning, maintenance and operation of facilities. However, they cannot be held fully responsible and require close guidance of adults or older children.
8-11	Provide a clear and practical set-up of facilities with an understandable relationship between hygiene theory and practice. Hygiene and sanitation facilities must offer well-integrated solutions for hand washing, anal cleansing and waste disposal. They should also offer some privacy, including from members of their own sex.	Children of this age can be involved (in groups) in activities to design, plan, maintain and operate facilities. They can also be given partial responsibility for implementation, operation and maintenance such as refilling of the hand washing facilities, painting and cleaning. The overall responsibility should be with adults or older children.
12-13	Ensure sufficient privacy for boys and girls, also inside facilities. The facilities for girls must have provisions for menstrual hygiene.	Girls and boys can be actively involved in the planning, construction, operation and maintenance with more responsibilities than the previous age group.
14-16	Same as for 12-13 age regarding gender and privacy.	Children in this age group can, to a large extent, be responsible for operation and maintenance of the facilities, including monitoring use and practices and evaluation of the effects of the facilities on the health situation at the school. They can and should also be involved in the design, baseline studies and possibly construction. Linking this age group with the younger children in school might stimulate the learning and development of all the children involved. This is also an age where children are ready to help schoolmates or families in less fortunate positions than their own

2. Child-friendly hygiene and sanitation facilities in schools are designed with involvement of children, teachers, parents and communities

The chance that people will adopt appropriate hygiene practices is much greater when they understand the importance of sanitation improvements and are allowed to find their own solutions. The process of designing hygiene and sanitation facilities can be seen as a participatory learning experience: facilitating a group of people in the analysis of their existing situation and guiding them to develop skills and obtain knowledge that enables them to set their own priorities and design appropriate solutions. Project staff involved in the development of facilities should see themselves as trainers and facilitators who guide the people through the design process and bring in background support with technical expertise and organisational and planning skills. The participatory design of facilities (the 'hardware') can be integrated as a powerful tool into the hygiene education programme (the 'software').

Some useful considerations for participatory design processes:

- It is impossible for the entire community to directly participate in the design process.
- It is important to assess the readiness of the stakeholders..
- Inform the stakeholders about the sequence of the design process.

Participatory design with children

Involvement of the principal users, the children, is essential. Children have a different view of the world than adults and therefore experience the use of facilities differently. Children can be frightened in situations that adults consider to be safe. When, for example, faeces are scattered on the floor around the toilet instead of ending up in the squatting hole, it should not immediately be interpreted as an act of misbehaviour. In many cases it indicates that children were afraid to squat above the hole.

Generally children are good designers: They are curious and interested in the world around them and they like to use their imagination. Moreover, they are good at finding solutions for problems that directly affect them. Some considerations when involving children in the design process:

- In most cultures, hygiene, and more particularly sanitation, is a sensitive subject. It is therefore recommended to create an environment that allows an open dialogue in which children feel free to talk about issues such as urinating, defecating and menstruation. Better results can be expected from an informal group session than from a traditional classroom set-up. To enable the open discussions it will often be necessary to separate girls and boys and the children by age group, and to keep teachers and other adults that are 'close' to them away from the group. Preferably, the facilitation of the group sessions should be done by neutral adults who, in order to build up trust, speak the local dialect or language; have in-depth knowledge of local customs and habits related to hygiene, water and sanitation; and are of the same sex, social class and ethnic group as the participants.
- The technical drawings normally used for design and construction purposes can be confusing because they do not properly illustrate how the facilities are going to look. Presentations that are more realistic should be used, such as perspective drawings

Mongolia: WASH in Schools and Communities
Project Design Document – Attachment E

and scale models. The latter can be easily adapted and could be made by the older children.

- When an innovative solution is proposed, it is better to make a full-scale pilot model. Maybe similar solutions have been implemented at other schools or a temporary 'testing facility' can be used to see how it works. Experimenting and trying out often results in the best solutions

3. Child-friendly hygiene and sanitation facilities in schools are designed to provide lowest-cost solutions with no compromise on quality

For toilet other than simple pit latrines, the lifespan is determined by the quality of the construction materials used, design improvements and operation and maintenance.

Tips to maximise the lifespan of facilities and to minimise maintenance problems:

Offer separate means of collection and disposal for cleansing materials other than water. Disposing of solid, and in particular non-degradable materials used for anal cleansing and menstrual hygiene (paper, leaves, stones, sticks, etc.) accelerates the filling up of pits. These materials should be collected separately in a container with a lid and subsequently disposed of beyond the school grounds in an environmentally friendly manner.

Good quality facilities demand the highest possible standards. They should be durable and must be able to withstand frequent use and cleaning. Surfaces that will come into contact with faeces or urine must be impermeable and easy to clean. This is particularly true in situations where soap and simple cleaning supplies are not readily available. Moulds can be used to make smooth-shaped surfaces and corners (the moulds can be used for serial production of slabs, seats, etc.). To facilitate cleaning of slabs, provisions can be made in the slabs to drain water used for cleaning.

4. Child-friendly hygiene and sanitation facilities in schools have operation and maintenance plans

A good operation and maintenance plan:

- Is developed and agreed upon before the facilities are completed.
- Defines responsibilities and monitoring
- Is non-discriminatory towards sex, age, caste, nationality, religion, ethnic group and social class
- Is linked to other school improvement efforts
- Ensures an open and ongoing dialogue. Problems related to operation and maintenance can be discovered before they can negatively affect the sanitation and hygiene situation at the school. The operation and maintenance plan should allow for easy diagnosis and reporting of problems. In addition, it should be reviewed periodically as deemed appropriate.

5. Child-friendly hygiene and sanitation facilities in schools *have appropriate dimensions and features for children*

Making facilities comfortable and accessible for all children It is impossible to set international standards for dimensions of hygiene and sanitation facilities in schools because the length and size of children vary per region. Standard dimensions are not necessary because at every school, children of all ages are available for measuring and trials. If a nice maths exercise is made out of this, they will often be very willing to assist.

The following dimensions should be determined:

- Height of seats (if seats are being used)
- Height of urinals
- Height of hand washing facilities (and can taps, ladles, soap, etc. be reached?)
- Distance between the footrests of squatting platforms
- Distance from the squatting platform to the wall (women and girls need more space to squat comfortably than men and boys)

In addition to the obvious differences in length, children of different ages also have different levels of physical strength and motor skills, requiring different solutions. The following aspects have to be considered and measured:

- Height of doorknobs and locks
- Height of steps and handrails of stairs
- Weight of the doors and hole covers
- Strength needed to open taps, fetch water, etc.
- Diameter of the squatting hole (also consider children's fear of falling in)

6. Child-friendly hygiene and sanitation facilities in schools *address the special gender-related needs and roles*

It is recommended to conduct participatory female sessions separately from the boys and men so that the girls and women can speak more freely. Important topics for girls and female teachers are:

- Location of facilities
- A proper environment for menstrual hygiene has to be provided for older girls and women.
- Dialogue on sensitive issues related to girls' hygiene should begin during design and continue into operation.

Urinals for boys and girls

- Most visits to a school toilet are for urinating only. Therefore, the provision of urinals has a lot of advantages.

7. Child-friendly hygiene and sanitation facilities in schools *do not harm the environment*

- Conserve water –pour flush system or dual flush systems can be used to minimise a less water use, use handwashing system that doses the quantity
- Prevent ground water pollution
- Avoid possible environmental hazards during disasters
- Consider eco san toilets

8. Child-friendly hygiene and sanitation facilities in schools *encourage hygienic behaviour*

- Provide hand washing facilities
- Provide good lighting and ventilation and insect control

9. Child-friendly hygiene and sanitation facilities in schools *offer enough capacity and minimal waiting time*

Estimate the demand and calculate the waiting times

9. Child-friendly hygiene and sanitation facilities in *schools chose well considered locations*

Criteria include:

Security, privacy, monitoring, supervision, environmental degradation, risk of groundwater contamination, accessibility and indiscriminate use outside of school hours

Source: Zomerplaag, J, Mooijman A. and IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre, (2005) Child-Friendly Hygiene and Sanitation Facilities in Schools: Indispensable to effective hygiene education. Published by IRC.