

How Does SuSanA Generate Impact?

Case Story 5: WASH in Schools in the Pan-European Region

At a Glance



Region: WHO European Region

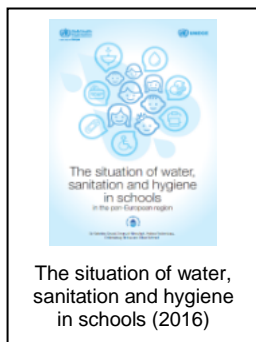
Topic: WASH in Schools in the Pan-European Region

Actors: WHO/EURO, UNECE, Institute for Hygiene and Health (University of Bonn), EEHYC, WECF, UNICEF

Impact Argument: Two publications on WASH in schools (WinS) in the pan-European region have been produced by the WHO Regional Office for Europe (WHO/EURO) and the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). The publications were supported by the expert group on advancing WASH in schools, established under the programme of work of the Protocol on Water and Health. Through the expert group, SuSanA contributed to the production and the development of the publications. The publications represent a first-time effort to collect the available evidence from the region. They aim at raising the profile of WASH in schools among parties to the Protocol on

Introduction

Adequate water, sanitation and hygiene in schools (WinS) is a necessary prerequisite to guarantee the education, good health and well-being of schoolchildren. In fact, access to water, hygiene and sanitation (WASH) is every human's and every child's right. WASH and in particular WinS have been addressed in various international frameworks and agreements. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development strives to reach universal and equitable access to safe WASH services and provide educational facilities that enable safe learning environments for all. The Protocol on Water and Health (1999) to the 1992 Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes establishes WASH accessibility in schools as a priority area and aims to ensure access to drinking water and



The situation of water, sanitation and hygiene in schools (2016)

sanitation for everyone, including children in schools. In addition, the Parma Declaration on Environment and Health aims at attaining healthy school environments in the pan-European region. Most recently, the Ostrava Declaration of the sixth ministerial conference on environment and health called on member states to set national portfolios of action towards reaching the international goals and striving to reach the regional goals set in the Parma Declaration.

The impact of inadequate WinS is not limited to the WASH sector. Health, education, nutrition and WASH are closely intertwined. This is also highlighted in the European health policy framework Health 2020, which emphasizes the need for enhanced collaboration between the different sectors as inadequate WASH in schools compromises pupils' education, health and well-being.

We talked to Valentina Grossi from the Institute for Hygiene and Public Health at University of Bonn, who is an expert in the area of WASH in schools and whose research on WinS in the pan-European region has resulted in the two recent WHO publications.

Interview

SuSanA: Valentina, in “The situation of water, sanitation and hygiene in schools in the pan-European region,” you look at the status of WASH in schools across Europe. What are your findings and how did you retrieve your data?

We conducted a systematic review of scientific literature aimed at collecting studies from the region dealing with WASH in schools and possible outcomes. We then realised that there were big gaps of information, especially on aspects like coverage of services and accessibility. We thus decided to complement the scientific review with a review of the grey literature, considering also data from member states, UNICEF and NGOs as well as making use of helpful tools such as the UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-water (GLAAS) and the global monitoring by UNICEF. As our target audience was mainly policy-makers, we finally collected data on the policy framework for WASH in schools in the region, with the help of member states and the expert group as well as through desk reviews.



Valentina Grossi,
University of Bonn

SuSanA: How is the focus you chose for “The Situation of water, sanitation and hygiene in schools in the pan-European region” different from “Prioritizing pupils' education, health and well-being. Water, sanitation and hygiene in schools in the pan-European region”, the second WHO publication on the topic that you co-authored?

Initially, we wanted to produce one publication, including both evidence and best practice. It only became clear later that we had to develop two independent but complementary publications to transmit clear messages. Hence, one

publication collects the evidence and identifies a list of priorities and the second is an advocacy document, contextualising the evidence within relevant international frameworks as well as translating the evidence into steps for action, providing examples of best practice.

SuSanA: You contributed as a co-author to both publications.

Whom did you collaborate with?

The publications are the product of the work under the Protocol on Water and Health, jointly coordinated by UNECE and WHO/EURO.

“The development of the publications was strongly supported by the WHO Expert Group on WASH in schools, including – among others – SuSanA WG7 as well as various SuSanA partners.”

***- Valentina Grossi,
University of Bonn***

The development of the publications was strongly supported by the WHO Expert Group on WASH in schools established under the Protocol, which included independent experts, colleagues from UNICEF country offices, representatives of member states and NGOs active in the field. Among these, SuSanA WG7 (WASH in Institutions and Gender Equality) was also represented, as well as SuSanA partners such as GIZ, the European Environment and Health Youth Coalition (EEHYC) and Women Engage for a Common Future (WECF). For the advocacy document “Prioritizing pupils’ education, health and well-being” I worked closely with Peter van Maanen, who led the development of the publication. Peter is a recognized WASH expert with immense experience on WASH in schools, working with UNICEF and WHO.

SuSanA: How did this collaboration – particularly with SuSanA – play out concretely?

Experts in the field of WASH in schools and members of SuSanA participated in the discussions at the expert group meetings, reviewed the drafts of the publications and provided input. SuSanA was also of help for disseminating the publications, as we were able to display them at SuSanA meetings and everyone interested can find them in the SuSanA library.

SuSanA: WASH in schools has been a focus of SuSanA’s work for many years. How have you made use of SuSanA and the resources it provides in your daily work?

I usually follow the discussions on the forum of the groups I am interested in. This is made particularly easy thanks to the weekly forum digest I subscribed to. The SuSanA platform makes it easy to find out about new publications or follow threads on topics that are relevant to my work, such as menstrual hygiene, for example. I also participated in a couple of thematic online discussions, which take place periodically and which often offer innovative perspectives from different regions. I also make use of the SuSanA library to stay up to date on recent publications in the field, such as case studies on WASH in schools and the valuable link collection on Menstrual Hygiene Management.

Thank you very much for taking the time to talk to us. We are looking forward to continuing our collaboration on improving the situation of WASH in schools.

Further Information

WHO Regional Office for Europe (2016). Prioritizing pupils’ education, health and well-being. Water, sanitation and hygiene in schools in the pan-European region. <http://www.susana.org/en/knowledge-hub/resources-and-publications/library/details/2725>

WHO Regional Office for Europe (2016). The situation of water, sanitation and hygiene in schools in the pan-European region. <http://www.susana.org/en/knowledge-hub/resources-and-publications/library/details/2726>

WHO Regional Office for Europe
<http://www.euro.who.int/en>

UN Economic Commission for Europe
<https://www.unece.org>

UNECE. Working Group on Water and Health
https://www.unece.org/env/water/pwh_bodies/wgwh.html

UNECE. Protocol on Water and Health
<https://www.unece.org/environmental-policy/conventions/water/protocol-on-water-and-health.html>

UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-water (GLAAS)
http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/monitoring/investments/glaas/en/

SuSanA WG 7 (WASH in Institutions and Gender Equality)
<http://www.susana.org/en/working-groups/community-rural-and-schools>

SuSanA Impact Case Story

WASH in Schools in the Pan-European Region

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