

Education campaigns in Bolivia

Good practice example: Health and environmental education at school level creating awareness and enhancing intersectoral collaboration

The German water programme PROAPAC initiated two health and environmental education campaigns in 2007, being „Agua para la Vida“ (Water for Life) and “Lavado de Manos“ (Hand washing). It focused on the education of school children in primary and secondary public schools as key agents of change and also on municipalities, local health centers and water & sanitation providers as important partners for implementation. It is also an excellent example of intersectoral collaboration to create awareness on water, environment and good hygiene practices that reached over 300.000 children and more than 10.000 facilitators in various regions of Bolivia until 2012.

Education campaigns as a corner stone of sector support

GIZ and its programme PROAPAC aimed at improving the quality of water and sanitation services in line with the National Development Plan (PND) and therein stipulated human right to water. The programme’s approach was to build the capacity of operators in service provision and in parallel to improve awareness on the area of water, environment and hygiene through awareness campaigns. In the year 2002 PROAPAC conceptualised an intersectoral approach that links up the three most important actors for water and basic sanitation - *municipality, utility company and population* – through different areas of work such as actor’s empowerment, constructive conflict management,

health and environmental education, gender, intercultural interaction and youth. Education campaigns developed to a



Photo: School children are colouring comic books about health and environmental topics

Project name	Cooperation programme for water and sanitation in small and medium cities (PROAPAC) http://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/12341.html
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Project region	Latin America, Bolivia
Lead executing agency	Vice-ministry of Water and Basic Sanitation
Duration	2001 – 2012

successful approach over the span of the programme.

Campaigns reaching national level

The programme started two campaigns on health and environmental education. It intended to mobilise children, teachers, parents and authorities to incorporate good hygiene practices, good sanitation, raise awareness on water resources and it’s efficient use and the shared responsibility to preserve the environment.

- Campaign “Agua para la Vida“ (Water for Life)**
This education campaign targeted school children of primary and secondary level in public peri-urban schools. It began in 2007 with small initiatives and reached national level by request from teachers that asked the Ministry of Water to replicate this experience in other locations. In order to spread the campaign, teachers were trained on the contents of health education and provided with supporting teaching material. Awareness within families was raised through children, assisted by communicational tools and massive media. The educational fairs allowed to present the knowledge learned and enabled the participants to reflect on the importance of water and health care.
- National Hand-Washing Campaign “Lavado de Manos“ (Hand-Washing)**
This campaign concentrated on promoting hand washing as crucial hygiene behaviour for 4th and 5th grades in public schools as part of school curriculum due to their role as multipliers. The schools needed to provide functional and well maintained school toilets as a precondition for participation.

It was initiated in 2007 and originated in the commitment of PROAPAC during the National Water Forum in Piñami, Cochabamba. A three-month pilot was implemented in seven schools. It served as a basis for the National Hand-Washing Campaign implemented in 2008 by the Vice-Ministry of Basic Sanitation with the initial support of the German Cooperation. After the pilot, the first and second stages of the campaign took place and served as input in the methodology planning, execution and adjustment, which was sustainable thanks to the leadership assumed by local governments, schools, health institutions, utilities and NGOs / private companies as sponsors for materials. Direct expenditures have been in the order of 3 to 5 US-\$/child.



Intersectoral cooperation

One of the important milestones prior to the start of campaigns was the intersectoral agreement between the two ministries of health/education and water/environment. It enabled the use of synergies between the sector players to implement the educational campaigns jointly and according to their particular responsibility. The interaction, collaborative learning and knowledge transfer involved teachers and children at school, their families, school authorities and health care sector authorities, water and sanitation service providers, local governments, regional governments, NGOs and private companies.

School children and teachers as key agents of change

An intense process was initiated to motivate people to participate in the project, working with social organisations, local councils, women organisations and young volunteers. The university and the nursing course were also involved in order to offer training on the importance of basic sanitation services and health and hygiene. The extension of this training to children was seen as the best way to involve the whole population in health and hygiene education topics, so that everyone felt responsible for the use and protection of resources and their own health at home. Naturally teachers as key actors for the education were selected to implement the campaigns on a day-to-day basis in schools.

It was important to give teacher active roles. This means that the teacher understands water, environmental and rubbish issues as tangible problems. Children that miss school because of diarrhoea, dengue, or respiratory infec-

tions could be their own children, and neglected toilets, which are a source of infections, could be used by their own children. Therefore, teachers commit to defend health, hygiene, water and the environment.

Didactic concept and training of facilitators

The campaign at school level used the literary genre of the story as the main instrument to reach children through a simple and understandable language that at the same time allows families to gather, to read and learn.

The strategy was to **encourage classroom projects** with the campaign's topics, so that these are part of the class structure and they are kept as part of the curriculum for schoolchildren. The teachers were trained in the elaboration of classroom projects and provided with supporting manuals, which aimed at making classes more enjoyable, motivating and meaningful, helping to internalize gender approaches and multiculturalism, encourages reflection and

Home grown ideas During the 1990s the Vice-Ministry of Basic Sanitation had developed a story called "Mariquita la Cochinita" (Mariquita the Filthy) that was not widespread. This story served as a basis to create didactic materials for the programme, especially for the conception of further stories to sensitise and train children on different topics such as hygiene, rubbish disposal, gender, environment, toilet care, and hand-washing among others.

action on hygiene practices, and the proper use of water, sanitation and protection of the environment. Such projects included drawing and colouring activities of the cartoon books or playing board games, concluded with guided



Photo: Cover of Colouring book with the Bolivian character "Mariquita the Filthy"

reading, group reflection, and learning and reinforcement of hygiene habits through washing of hands. This sensitized the children and predisposed them to adopt a positive attitude towards these topics.

A toilet bag with grooming articles allowed children to learn through these supplies and to apply the learned hygiene practices while using water rationally.

Complementing classroom activities, educational materials on the topics of the campaigns were produced and presented at educational fairs, activities outside the classroom using the strategy of open classroom, doing tours around the school, going to places where water is polluted or visiting EPSA, where drinking water is produced.

Cooperation with Municipalities and Water and Sanitation utilities

The campaigns were also integral part of municipality and utility development and their capacity building. Both institutions informed the populations about the importance of water and the co-responsibility of the various stakeholders. The utilities for example invited school classes to their premises ("open day") to learn about water. Moreover municipalities agreed to provide a budget for maintenance or re-construction of school toilets and the respective utilities agreed to provide operation and maintenance services for the facilities. Altogether the campaigns mobilized the local government and even private sector to provide better services to schools.

Additionally to the school materials the programme developed manuals and training materials for public sector professionals to implement the campaigns.

Scope and impact

The educational process grew gradually to reach national projection, as campaigns developed at selected locations of the nine departments of the country, in urban, suburban and rural areas.

Campaign times were short periods of 3-6 months. Changes in behaviour of children, teachers and parents were noticed in schools, through monitoring visits during and after implementation. Monitoring was divided into two parts: a first period in 2009, during the implementation of campaigns, and a second one in 2011, during the monitoring and follow-up.

Surveys were also conducted on different campaign themes among parents, teachers and children in order to measure what had been learned and assimilated. In this case, a base-line survey was executed before initiating campaigns, a

second one when campaigns were completed, and a third time in 2011 once monitoring was completed to see how



Photo: *Left.* Children practising handwashing with soap and nail brushes. *Right.* Various education materials

much was left after the educational process.

Lavado de manos: Scope of the programme			
Year	Children	Facilitators	Schools
2007	4'800	500	6
2008	37'000	3'500	200
2009	14'531	831	97
2010	5'236	602	32
2011	7'623	813	99
April 2012	2'250	130	18
TOTAL	64'343	6'376	452

Agua para la vida: Scope of the programme			
Year	Children	Teachers	Schools
2007	25'700	160	74
2008	147'396	5'400	528
2009	60'200	2'834	278
2010	26'554	1'471	237
2011	5'893	494	69
April 2012	6'824	566	66
TOTAL	272'567	10'925	1'252

Lessons learned

Among the positive aspects of the programme are:

- The goal to raise public awareness in health education was met, and it even went beyond children, the main beneficiaries.
- The education material was incorporated into the school curricular and has been reproduced by different institutions with much success.

- Commitment of municipalities to improve school toilets as precondition for the campaign „Lavado de manos“.

Among the aspects that can be improved are:

- Improve the role of municipal governments, as they bear the responsibility and should lead the educational processes. They may delegate the implementation to EPSA, but they should remain as leaders at the local level.
- Implementation should be delegated to local institutions, so that the experience developed by the local staff and all related issues remain as installed capacity in the responsible institutions.
- Various local institutions work isolated and often duplicate efforts. In this case GIZ becomes a facilitator of inter-sectoral dialogue.

Resources

School materials for awareness and hygiene campaigns		
Type	Title and Subject	Pages
Campaña “Agua para la Vida”		
Colouring book	<u>El Cuento De Mariquita La Cochinita</u> <i>Handwashing and Food hygiene</i>	26
Colouring book	<u>El cuento Juan bota todo</u> <i>Waste disposal and avoidance</i>	26
Colouring book	<u>El cuento de Mariquita y el cuidado de los baños</u> <i>Cleaning of toilets</i>	15
Comic book	<u>Historieta Mariquita y el cambio climático</u> <i>Climate change</i>	21
Comic book	<u>Aprendiendo a cuidar nuestros sistemas de agua y alcantarillado</u> <i>Water resource and protection</i>	30
Campaña “Lavado de manos”		
School Book	<u>Compendio informativo sobre enfermedades hídricas</u> <i>WASH related diseases and hand-washing practice</i>	47
Teaching materials	<u>Material educativo de apoyo para maestros, personal de salud y saneamiento básico – Campaña Nacional “Lavado de Manos”</u> <i>Teaching Materials on personal health and hygiene</i>	39

Teaching materials	<u>Material educativo para jóvenes facilitadores – Campaña Nacional “Lavado de Manos”</u> <i>Games and task for class</i>	45
Teaching materials	<u>Hojas de trabajo para niños y niñas 4° y 5° de primaria – Campaña nacional “Lavado de Manos”</u> <i>Games and task for class”</i>	27
Flyer Comic	<u>10 sugerencias para el buen uso de baños ecológicos</u> <i>Operation & Maintenance of UDDTs</i>	2
Flyer Comic	<u>10 reglas para usar racionalmente el agua</u> <i>Appropriate use of water</i>	2
Book	<u>Guía de Educación Sanitaria y Ambiental</u> <i>Guide-line for implementation of hygiene campaign in schools</i>	72
DVD	Video educativo “ <u>Got y Tita</u> ” y “ <u>Cuentos de la Mariquita</u> ”	2 pcs

Awareness and hygiene materials for institutions and utilities		
Type	Title and Subject	Pages
Training Module Professionals	<u>¿Qué debemos saber acerca del agua potable?</u> <i>Utility services for drinking water</i>	92
Training Module Professionals	<u>¿Qué debemos saber acerca del alcantarillado?</u> <i>Utility service for sewerage</i>	60
Training Module Professionals	<u>¿Qué debemos saber acerca del medio ambiente?</u> <i>Utility services and the environment</i>	61
Training Module Professionals	<u>Manual de instrucción Programa Centinela de la Madre Tierra</u> <i>Health and environment topics for military sector</i>	248
Manual	<u>Gestión comunitaria de agua y saneamiento ambiental</u> <i>Manual for youth and adult education</i>	141

Materials are all available online under:

<http://www.susana.org/lang-en/library/library?view=cckbtypeitem&type=2&id=2009>

Other materials and publications:

- Systematisation of health and environmental education [DMS in [Spanish](#) and [English](#)]
- Quiton M. et al., (2009). Public Health and Sanitation in Bolivia, a work in progress. IWA conference paper. [DMS]
- Award during World Water Day 2011 [DMS]

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