

Football for Water Ghana

Football for Water (F4W) uses the love for football to create life-saving hygiene practices among school children, their peers and their families. Combined with investments in water, sanitation and football facilities on school premises, F4W contributes to healthy children and their communities.

The problem we solve

Having access to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) facilities can stop preventable diseases, like diarrhea, cholera and dysentery. Diarrhea for instance, weakens the body and makes it prone to infections, and it can lead to stunting or even death. In Ghana, 38% of the schools have access to safe water and 56% to basic sanitation facilities. Of all Ghanaian children 23% suffer from stunting.

Although the percentage of children under five dying from diarrhea is decreasing in Ghana, it remains high at 6%. The Football for Water program helps achieving the Education Service's goal of improving sustainable access to WASH in schools, thereby realizing Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6. What's more, healthy children are less likely to miss school and demonstrate improved academic performance.

Our strategies

Football for Water is an innovative and successful WASH in Schools intervention. Currently, we work across Ghana (see the exact locations). Our three main strategies are as follows:

1. Investing in WASH and football infrastructure

The F4W program invests in quality latrines, handwashing, safe drinking water and football facilities on primary school premises. We renovate or replace facilities that meet international standards. And we make sure latrines are safe for girls and accessible for children with a disability.

So far, we are about to sign Memoranda of Understanding with 296 primary schools.

Schools are selected in consultation with the Ghana Education Service and the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies.

2. Improving life-saving hygiene practices among school children

Football and hygiene are a winning combination leading to successful behavior change.

Football offers fun, fitness and discipline, which accelerates children's motivation and memory retention. Our football coaches – known as WorldCoaches – serve as role models, demonstrating good hygiene practices and inspiring the children to practice them too. Also, the team spirit of sports helps children to retain new hygiene practices they've learned as a team.

As a result, children take on new daily habits faster and more easily, like using latrines and washing hands. And we make sure latrines are girl friendly and cater for their menstrual hygiene needs, and that they are accessible for children with a disability, which results in higher self-esteem and increased school attendance. All of this creates a butterfly effect; Children share the message of good hygiene with their peers and families, and the community during football events.

3. Building sustainable change: partnerships and financing models

Once WASH services are in place, we make sure they keep working by supporting key stakeholders, like local government authorities, school management and community representatives; F4W trains teachers to be WorldCoaches, school management in planning and budgeting, and artisans and entrepreneurs in maintenance and operations. And we ensure financial models are in place to cover the costs that come with the maintenance and operations of the WASH and football facilities.



Result 1: School children have access to safe and clean WASH and football facilities



Result 2: Improved health & increased school attendance, performance and enrolment



Result 3: Water and sanitation facilities are sustainably managed

Making our solution sustainable

Although the Ghanaian government provides schools with funds that can be used for operations and maintenance, these are often insufficient to cover the costs due to competing demands. That is why F4W facilitates stakeholders to take the following steps:

Step 1

Key stakeholders sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) committing themselves to ownership and taking responsibility for keeping the facilities well-maintained.

Step 2

The school management draws up a facility management plan, which includes the total costs of operation for WASH and football facilities.

Step 3

The school management – together with teachers, parents and community representatives – looks for ways to cut and recover costs.

Examples of cost recovery activities are:

- **Pupils participating in income generating activities**, such as tree planting, making soap or selling stationery.
- **Crowdfunding at public schools**. Some schools ask their former pupils to make a small donation, in cash or in kind.
- **Encouraging parents to voluntarily contribute** resources, in cash or in kind.

- We currently discuss the possibilities of having the community using the schools' facilities – clean water supply, toilets or the football field – and pay per use.

Revenues are for Maintenance & Operations only. However, investments in WASH infrastructure are still necessary. Once we've developed solid cost recovery activities and guarantee sustainable collaboration with the Ghanaian government, we can attract supplementary funds from the Official Development Assistance (ODA) community, major grant donors and the private sector.

Leveraging Ghana's WASH in Schools strategies

At Football for Water we believe that our successful behavior change method can contribute to leveraging Ghana's WASH in Schools strategies. As the Education Service is a major Football for Water stakeholder, we kindly invite you to develop sustainable mechanisms together, before F4W implementation closes at the end of 2019.

We could collaborate even more on a joint implementation of our behavior change method within the national WASH in Schools programs and replicate it to many other schools. We would be glad to offer our support in ensuring access to WASH and football services for school children across Ghana.

How F4W contributes to Ghana's national goals

- **The national government is committed** to universal access to free basic education. F4W contributes to increased school attendance and enrolment, especially among girls.
- **According to the School Health Policy**, schools should provide health and hygiene education. The F4W approach provides WASH education and an integrated behavior change method.
- **At a national level** the School Health Education Program (SHEP) Unit is responsible for WASH in Schools. At a regional level, the Ghana Education Service aims at improving sustainable access to WASH in schools. F4W practically assists schools with capacity building on WASH topics.
- **The national government** committed itself to provide 75% of Basic Education schools with potable water and all of these schools with sanitation facilities, by 2020. F4W's design for toilet blocks – that meets the national standards – reduces construction costs up to 20% and thus enables achieving these goals.
- **The Inclusive Education Policy** underscores the need to provide disability friendly facilities in existing schools. F4W has supported this in schools in Ghana.
- **F4W contributes** to achieving SDG6: Increasing access to water and sanitation services for communities, households and schools, and to SDG5 on gender equality via F4W's menstrual hygiene management education.

Our history

Football for Water – a public-private partnership – was launched on World Water Day 2012.

During **Phase 1** (2012-2016), we implemented and tested WASH infrastructure and behavior change methods. In **Phase 2** (2017-2019), we improved our interventions and developed sustainability models. Currently, we are getting ready for **Phase 3**: Scale our proven concept.

Our Ghanaian partners: School Health Education Program (SHEP); Ghana Education Service; UNICEF Ghana; Salvation Army, Vitens Evides International, Ghana Water Company and Beyond The GoalPost.

Technical support comes from the Royal Dutch Football Association ([KNVB's WorldCoaches' program](#)) and from Akvo ([Really Simple Reporting tool](#)). Aqua for All provides the overall coordination.

Contact

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Inputs



Regions

Greater Accra, Northern- and Central Region (Phase I)

plus Greater Accra, Ashanti-, Central-, Eastern-, Northern -, Upper East- and Volta Region (Phase II)



GHS 19,065,296

Is invested in Football & WASH in Ghana, over the past two years (Phase II)



Other investments

The Ghana Education Service dedicated their staff, network and time to F4W.

Outcomes



311 schools

With new WASH & football facilities

Phase I: 226
Phase II: 85



126,722

Children trained in football and hygiene

Phase I: 95,232
Phase II: 31,490



815

WorldCoaches trained

Phase I: 570
Phase II: 245

Impact

All contributing to the impact we envision:

Decreased prevalence of WASH-related diseases among school children and their communities.

Community outreach in Ghana is: 506,888 (total beneficiaries)