

Advocacy for Action on Girl-friendly WASH in Schools Project

Annual REPORT

Submitted by	Alumni Hawa C. Wilson Alumni Atty. Facia B. Harris
Date	FY 2022 Annual Report.

BACKGROUND

The *“Advocacy for Action on Girl-friendly WASH in Schools Project”* was funded by the U.S. Department of State and implemented by Alumna Ms. Facia B. Harris and Ms. Hawa C. Wilson with Paramount Young Women Initiative/PAYOWI as fiscal host.

PAYOWI is a women-led Liberian non-profit, nongovernmental advocacy, and empowerment initiative for young women and girls’ rights, with a keen focus on empowering Liberian women, aiming for gender equality and the eradication of all forms of discrimination against them, through empowering and mobilizing women’s participation in the struggle against gender discrimination and disparity in workplaces, their economic and civic rights, and the expansion of women’s access to justice by improving their psychological well-being and combating gender-based violence.

The *“Advocacy for Action on Girl-friendly WASH in Schools Project”* seeks to directly enhance the health and quality of the learning environment for students, most especially female students by influencing schools to develop and implement policies and practices that allow them to always have available, clean and accessible toilets for the students, especially girls on campus.

Report Summary

The report covers activities ranging from consultation meetings with WASH stakeholders and actors as well as school administrators, students grouping, parents, teachers’ associations (PTA), and local communities for strategic partnership and the successful implementation of the project objectives.

Additionally, The WASH activities implemented also observed the celebration of World Menstrual Hygiene Day/May and carried out post-COVID-19 awareness/ engagements with communities and project schools.

Activities Achieved: Milestones

Milestone One:

Initial WASH Sector Consultation

The Alumni conducted a one-day initial WASH sector consultation engagement meeting with National Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Commission (NWSHC), on the 8th of February 2022 at the office of the Commission in Sinkor, Monrovia. The NWSHC was represented at the meeting by the Head of the Communication & Awareness Department along with two other staff.

In his remarks, the Director for Communications at the NWSHC welcomed the Alumni and the United States Embassy support through the Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund for supporting the initiative, adding that the project goals and objectives align with the Commission's work, and support the Government of Liberia efforts in promoting adequate and WASH environments for students most especially females. He furthered that the Commission recognizes that access to water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) in an educational setting brings many tangible benefits, noting that good hygiene systems in schools reduce the risk of infectious diseases and directly maintain retention because when students are healthy, it reduces absenteeism and the provision of accessible and acceptable toilet facilities contributes to the well-being of girls and increases the ability to concentrate during classes. The Commission embraced the partnership and looked forward to providing the required technical support to ensure the project is successful and the utmost beneficiaries are reached.

Inception conversations were also held with thirty school administrators. At these meetings, the project aim, and objectives were discussed, and the need for partnership and collaboration for the implementation of the project. The administrators agreed that maintaining WASH-friendly facilities continue to be a concerning need for students, especially for girls in their respective institutions. They specifically highlighted the compelling need for WASH services during girls' menstruation, interrupting their time in school.

Milestone Two:

WASH Situational Analysis

An assessment was conducted with thirty (30) schools in Montserrado and Margibi Counties to assess the quality of facilities and how safe they were for use by the students and administrators— looking at the overall situation of WASH in schools. The data was collected using the Qualitative Information System (QIS) in representative sample studies. Data collected from the WASH facilities situation mapping across the two counties presented diverse challenges, most frequently related to inappropriate system operation; problems with physical infrastructure; lack of continuous provision of hygiene consumables; inadequate, cleaning; lack of access to water, and insufficient maintenance. The analysis of data collected shows that the schools' administrators struggled to provide a safe, inclusive, and equitable learning environment for all, leaving female students and female school administrators as the most vulnerable.

For the purpose of the project, 30 schools were used as the sample size for the data collection on the status of the WASH facilities in the schools.

Below is the list of the schools that were accessed:

No.	Schools name	Location of schools	Type of School
1	G. W. Gibson	Montserrado	Public
2	Peace Island Community School	Montserrado	Public
3	New Destiny Christian School	Montserrado	Public
4	C. William Brumskine Elementary sch	Montserrado	Public
5	ETMI public school	Montserrado	Public
6	Dixville Public School	Montserrado	Public
7	Marvin Sonii Public School	Montserrado	Public
8	E. Jonathan Goodridge	Montserrado	Private
9	Slipway Community School	Montserrado	Public
10	SIMS community School	Montserrado	Public
11	Upper Caldwell Community School	Montserrado	Public
12	Soul Clinic School	Montserrado	Public
13	Oluremi Tinubu Public School	Montserrado	Public
14	Harbel Multilateral School	Margibi	Public
15	Robert Stanley Caurlfield	Margibi	Private
16	Albert Daniel Peabody	Margibi	Private
17	June L. Moore School	Margibi	Private
18	Rev. Mark H. Parker	Margibi	Private
19	Amos T. Taybior Institute	Montserrado	Private
20	Johnsonville Public School	Montserrado	Public
21	Barnesville Public School	Montserrado	Public
22	Marshall community School	Margibi	Public

23	Wells Hairston Institute	Montserrado	Private
24	Gibraltar Public School	Montserrado	Public
25	Calvary Chapel Mission School	Montserrado	Private
26	Paynesville Public School	Montserrado	Public
27	Charles J. S. Young School	Montserrado	Private
28	Nathan E. Gibson School	Montserrado	Private
29	Action Faith Institute	Montserrado	Private
30	Caver Mission Academy	Montserrado	Private

Pre-assessment data as per the International best practices systems for WASH in Schools attached.

Pre – assessment data

Core WASH in Schools Indicators Peace Island Model School				Other Considered Indicators			
Name Institution	Drinking Water	Sanitation	Hygiene	Menstrual Health & Hygiene	COVID-19 Measures	Waste Management	School Management
Peace Island Model Public School	Basic Service: Drinking water from an improved source ¹	Limited service: Functional, gender-segregated toilet in deplorable condition	No service: no handwashing facility with water and soap available at the time of the survey; and no budgetary allocation for sustainable hygiene management	No sanitary pad or appropriate bin provided for menstrual hygiene management in privacy	No thermometer available at the time of assessment, limited plans for infection prevention and controls to ensure preparedness in the case of another national outbreak	No garbage bin for waste disposal and no dump site for proper garbage disposal	No budget allocation for WASH operations and maintenance including
Rev. Mark H. Parker school	No Service: No safe drinking water	Limited service: Functional, gender-segregated toilet in deplorable condition	No service: no handwashing facility with water and soap available at the time of the survey	No sanitary pad or appropriate bin provided for menstrual hygiene management in privacy	No thermometer available at the time of assessment, limited plans for infection prevention and controls to ensure preparedness in the case of another national outbreak	No garbage bin for waste disposal and no dump site for proper garbage disposal	No budget allocation for WASH operations and maintenance including
Dixville public	Basic Service: Drinking water from an improved source	Basic service: Improved sanitation facilities that are single-sex and usable (available, functional, and private)	No service: No handwashing facility with water and soap available at the time of the survey	No sanitary pad or appropriate bin provided for menstrual hygiene management in privacy	No thermometer available at the time of assessment, limited plans for infection prevention and controls to ensure preparedness in the case of another national outbreak	No garbage bin for waste disposal and no dump site for proper garbage disposal; waste disposal includes burning which creates a carbon footprint that is harmful to the environment	No budget allocation for WASH operations and maintenance including
Upper Caldwell community	Basic Service: Drinking water from an improved source ²	Limited service: Functional, gender-segregated toilet in deplorable condition	No service: no handwashing facility with water and soap available at the time of the survey; and no budgetary allocation for sustainable hygiene management	No sanitary pad or appropriate bin provided for menstrual hygiene management in privacy	No thermometer available at the time of assessment, limited plans for infection prevention and controls to ensure preparedness in the case of another national outbreak	No garbage bin/dumpsite for proper waste disposal; waste disposal includes burning which creates a carbon footprint that is harmful to the environment	No budget allocation for WASH operations and maintenance including

The analysis of the data collected from the WASH facilities situation mapping process presented the following findings:

- ✓ The need to go beyond a basic level and meet users' needs in order to achieve health gains
- ✓ The need for female students to have adequate and appropriate access to clean and user-friendly facilities.
- ✓ The surveys reveal the frequent dissatisfaction with school WASH facilities, which is not always acknowledged by school management and staff, fostering avoidance of the services and hindering healthy practices.
- ✓ Where WASH facilities may be appropriate according to the parameters considered for public health inspection, they are still perceived as unacceptable or inappropriate by the students – especially girls – with respect to hygiene and privacy.
- ✓ Female students reported higher severity and frequency of issues compared to reporting by school staff or through inspection visits. This suggests a gap and insufficient awareness of school staff of the challenges faced by the students at school most especially female students.

Findings showed that schools mapped and assessed need improved WASH facilities and policy. However, based on the threshold and scope of the project, 10 schools were selected as pilot institutions in both counties for intervention. The goal was to work with the schools to develop and adapt girl-friendly school WASH policies to ensure that all WASH facilities are in compliance with the acceptable minimum standards set by the government of Liberia/ international best practices, resulting in public health gains for students and administrators.

Pictorial of facilities assessed before the project implementation.





Milestone Three:

School and PTA Engagement

In collaboration with our partner, the National Water Sanitation and Hygiene Commission (NWSHC), the alumni conducted a ten-day WASH situation analysis workshop across the 10 selected pilot schools in Margibi and Montserrado counties. The workshop brought together school administrators, student leadership, members of the Parents Teacher Association, (P.T.A) health workers, and community leadership.

During these sessions, the school administrators and community leaders welcomed and commended the alumni and the United States Embassy's support through the Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund to help combat one of the many challenges the education sector is faced with, especially at their various locals. At the workshop, the pilot schools acknowledged their lapses and affirmed their commitment to work with the alumni to help address the poor WASH conditions within their institutions.

During the conversation on ways of generating support and sustainability for the project, school administrators committed to establishing girls' advocacy groups and health clubs on various campuses while the PTA also pledged their commitment to work with the schools to organize some fundraising activities to help support the schools' WASH policy and budget for effective implementation. Members of the PTA further noted that access to WASH friendly environment limits the spread of infectious diseases and other health issues as well as help improve other health and educational benefits to the students, especially girls. The workshops brought together 215 participants, 112 males, and 105 females. The participants were school administrators, members of various PTA groups, health workers, and student council government/leadership.

Milestone Four:

Community Engagement and Outreach

Improving WASH access and awareness and building healthier and more resilient communities are integral parts of the Advocacy for Action on Girls' -friendly WASH in Schools Project and. The alumni jointly conducted community awareness with Paramount Young Women Initiative and *Girls for Positive Change Organization* on the importance of WASH with a key focus on

sanitation, waste management, and COVID-19 prevention protocols as well as encouraging community dwellers to keep washing their hands 3 -4 times a day or more. Collectively, interventions reached over **1,000 people** with quality awareness messages on WASH activities.

The awareness team reached out to approximately 20 communities within Montserrado and Margibi Counties namely: Dixville, Upper Caldwell, Samukai Camp, Harbel, Disco Hill, Sugar Hill, Mount Barclay, Soul Clinic, Red-light, Marshall, Congo Town, Peace Island community, Nywen town, Duazon, Rock Crusher, Sand Beach, Dolo Town, Johnsonville, Pipeline, GSA Road community, and Zubah town, etc. During the awareness, one on one conversations/focus group discussions were held and some communities applauded the alumni for such a brilliant activity and urged the team to continue as health matters or issues should be of concern to everyone, given Liberia's experience with Ebola and COVID. Additionally, flyers and stickers with WASH messages were used to create awareness and distributed to public and private buildings. A total of 100 households were reached during the awareness.



Milestones Five: School Outreach and Awareness Campaigns

As part of the awareness and information dissemination activities of the project, visibility, and educational materials that include banners, school signs, and T-shirts were developed and produced for use throughout the project.

ABC/BCC materials on COVID-19 and WASH including disinfectants for schools were also distributed these included items such as bathroom setups, soaps, buckets, trash cans, paints, chloride, tire soap, bathroom brushes, tissues, and sanitary pads. With these items, more females begin to use the toilet facilities/bathrooms frequently.

Additionally, the availability of these items impacted and simply contributed to the female student's appreciation of their rights and dignity and help provide an appreciation of what creating a girl-friendly learning environment means, and it also served as an important

opportunity to enable better health and hygienic space where students are given sufficient information about the health benefits of the items distributed.

Also under this milestone, there were media activities which included radio engagements and the publishing of News articles that helped with public awareness of the project activities and the need for Girl-friendly WASH facilities and activities in schools. The media engagements were also used to also help encourage all stakeholders to invest in WASH activities, especially in schools.



Milestone Six:

School WASH Facility Improvement Plan

With a focus on creating an equitable and WASH-friendly learning environment, the alumni engaged with the participating schools in identifying ways to help improve the WASH facilities on the school campuses. The alumni worked along with the schools and a consultant to develop a WASH facility improvement plan. In an effort to promote and achieve SDGs 4 and 6 which calls for the provision of quality education for all and the availability and sustainable management of water, sanitation, and hygiene for all, each of the schools fully participated in the development and revision of the plan.

On July 29, 2022, the alumni along with project beneficiaries/participants launched the WASH in School WASH facility-level improvement plan. The launch marked the official start of engagements with the larger body of the participating schools and the PTAs on how they can take measures to contribute to the improvement of the school WASH environment.

The launch was also an opportunity for individuals from the public, private, and non-profit sectors to consolidate and appreciate the project's goals, and for the pilot schools to fully engage, network, and share their experiences and understanding of what the project will achieve and its potential impact for the schools.

The event was attended by 58 participants from pilot schools, and PTAs from various schools and invited guests from private and public institutions including the National Water Sanitation and Hygiene Commission, CSOs, and the U. S. Embassy Liberia, among others. Key themes emerging from stakeholder inputs and discussions include:

- a multi-stakeholder approach to addressing WASH in school is key,
- the project design and activities must prioritize improving WASH conditions in schools below are key elements/components of the WASH improvement plan.

Facility-Level Improvement Plan

According to the National Guidelines for the Implementation of the Liberia (WINS) WASH in Schools Policy:

- 1) All schools are to have an organized system to make **safe drinking water available to all students**.
- 2) All schools are to have **adequate, clean, functional, accessible, and privacy and safe toilet facilities and a solid waste management system** that meet the standards set by the Ministry of Education and through the technical support of the Ministry of Public Works.
- 3) All children in school must **WASH their hands with soap and water** before entering the school and at all five critical times (before eating, before cooking, after using the latrine, after cleaning a baby, and after playing or touching animals). All students in school **to perform supervised daily group hand washing with soap at least once a day as part of daily school activities. To also introduce Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) for girls to have access to WASH services during menstruation.**
- 4) **All teachers, school authorities, facilities coordinators, and health personnel must be oriented and trained on the Ministry of Education's WINS program.**

At the facility level, this has several implications. Consistent with the globally recognized definitions for drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene, schools are to strive to attain the basic level of provision of services. Given international best practice, the basic criteria for safe drinking water, dignified sanitation, and adequate hygiene are met only when:

- a) Drinking water from an improved source and water is available at the school at the time of the survey;
- b) Improved sanitation facilities at the school that are single-sex and usable (available, functional, and private) at the time of the survey; and
- c) Handwashing facilities with water and soap available at the school at the time of the survey.

At the **Soul Clinic Community School**, at the time of the survey, this was not the case. As recommended in the Implementing Guidelines Section of the National WINS Policy:

Water

- School authorities, Government, or administrators must ensure that a source of water or a system to make water available for drinking and hand washing is available in the schools. Alternatively, require all children to bring individual water bottles or containers to school, ensuring that water is coming from a clean source.
- Schools can consider having a low-cost water treatment system in each of the classrooms in schools without potable water, whereas schools with handpumps must be treated regularly for contamination.

Sanitation

- All school authorities/the Government shall ensure that students have access to adequate, clean, and functional toilets for health and hygiene needs. All teachers/partners/Ministry of Education (MOE) shall ensure proper orientation on the operation and use of toilets in the school and on individual hand washing.
- Adequate hand washing and toilet facilities for boys and girls shall be constructed in all public and private elementary and secondary schools following the Ministry of Education standard on the pupil-to-toilet ratio of 1:50 for boys and 1:30 for girls.
- All schools shall ensure that soap and water are available in hand washing stations near toilets.
- All schools shall follow proper septic and wastewater disposal.
- All school authorities/Health Club Members shall ensure that school toilets and hand washing facilities are regularly and properly maintained.
- School authorities and teachers must assign daily cleaners to all toilets.
- School maintenance Funds can be used to implement minor maintenance and repair of toilets and other wash facilities.

Hygiene

- Teachers shall facilitate the conduct of daily group hand washing with soap.
- Daily group hand washing activity shall be included in the daily classroom schedule of each class.
- To ensure effective implementation of this program, all school authorities shall facilitate or coordinate with Parents Teachers Association (PTA) to ensure that schools have an adequate supply of soaps and ensure the regular maintenance of hand washing facilities.
- Teachers shall ensure that students know and practice handwashing, especially at critical times such as after using the toilet, before eating, and after playing and gardening.

Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) / Personal Health

- All school authorities in coordination with partners should create a massive awareness of Menstrual Hygiene Management and shall initiate measures to make available garbage cans for proper disposal in toilets.
- All teachers and school authorities shall provide information and access to the proper disposal.

Capacity Building

- Orientation/training for the WASH program shall be conducted for WASH coordinators, teachers, health personnel, students, and other stakeholders.
- Child-led hygiene promotion shall be conducted monthly.
- WASH/Health clubs shall be created in schools to promote child-led WASH activities

In the case of **Soul Clinic Community School**, given the findings of the situational analysis, the national WINS policy guidelines, and the scope of the Advocacy for Action on Girl-friendly WASH in Schools Project, we recommend the following immediate and longer-term actions.

Table 2: Project Indicators and Facility-Level Recommendations

Indicator	Immediate Term Recommendation	Longer Term Recommendation
Drinking Water	School begins immediate water quality testing and exploring options for water treatment to improve the quality of water for drinking water for its students	With the availability of safe drinking water on-premise, the school can consider the erection of an overhead tank and filtration system to allow climate-resilient water flow throughout the facility year-round.
Sanitation	Institute a robust cleaning management system to improve the status of the existing infrastructure	Adequate gender-segregated toilet facilities should be constructed following the pupil-to-toilet ratio of 1:50 for boys and 1:30 for girls.
Hygiene	School can ensure that soap and water are available in hand washing stations near toilets. This can be as basic as a handwashing bucket or tippy tap. Institute group handwashing.	School to engage PTA to establish hand hygiene clubs and ensure budgetary allocation for sustainable hygiene management (year-round soap purchases)
Menstrual Health and Hygiene	School to identify MHH warden (support teacher) and purchase sanitary pads for emergency needs.	
COVID-19 Preventive Measures	School to procure a thermometer for routine temperature monitoring for infection prevention and controls to ensure preparedness in the case of another national COVID-19 outbreak	
Waste Management	School to avoid burning or burying waste to minimize carbon footprint and harm to the environment. Institute a waste management plan for proper waste collection and disposal in partnership with city authorities	

Milestone Seven:

Advocacy Training for Girls and Student Government Leaders

A day-long advocacy workshop was conducted at each of the project schools across Montserrado and Margibi Counties. The training brought together student leaders, school guidance counselors, and some administrators summing up the total of 250 persons benefiting from this activity. The training focused on proper hand and daily washing techniques, the importance of effective WASH / WINs systems and protocols in schools including functional gender-friendly WASH spaces on campus, and how to fully implement the WASH facility improvement plan developed by the schools and alumni.

During these training sessions, and conversations on the creation of gender-friendly spaces, both female and male students shared their experiences on the usage of WASH facilities.

Student Hawa S. Folley from the Harbel Multilateral High School stated that since her enrolment at the school, she hasn't used the bathroom from 7th grade to now, grade 11. This session also provided an opportunity for deeper reflection and feedback from students on more innovative ways of sustaining a healthy, clean, and safe WASH environment at all times.



Milestone Eight:

Project Impact

To assess the impact of the project, a post-survey was conducted among the 10 project schools. Of the 49 participants, 94 percent responded that there had been changes with regard to WASH since the intervention in their school.

Highlighting the level of changes schools have experienced, twenty-four respondents indicated clean and improved sanitary conditions of the bathrooms. Eight respondents said girls now feel safe using the school's bathroom and don't have to skip school during menstruation. They also

indicated the availability of sanitary pads for girls within the schools. Twelve respondents said the general school environments are clean, safe, and have good hygiene management systems.

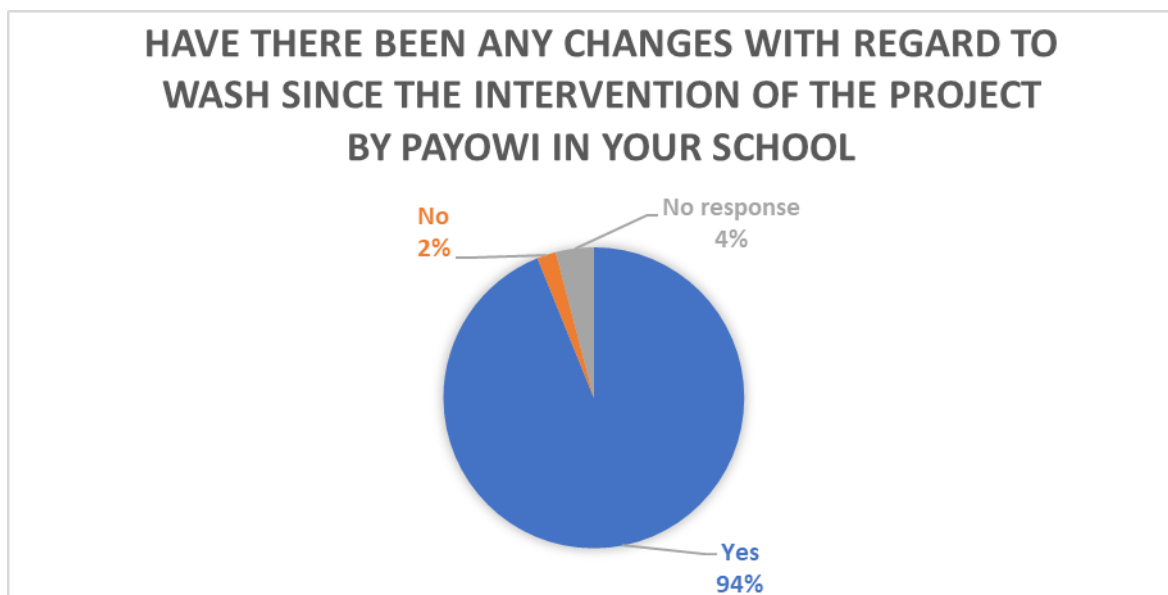
Post assessment data

Core WASH in Schools Indicators				Other Considered Indicators		
Institution name	Drinking Water	Sanitation	Hygiene	Menstrual Health & Hygiene	COVID-19 Measures	Waste Management
Duazon public school	Basic Service: Drinking water from an improved source ¹	Limited service: Functional, gender-segregated toilet. But not well maintained	Limited Service: hand-washing facilities is available but not functional	sanitary pad available there is a bin provided for menstrual hygiene management	No thermometer available at the time of assessment, limited plans for infection prevention and controls to ensure preparedness in the case of another national outbreak	No garbage bin for waste disposal and no dump site for proper garbage disposal
New Destiny Christian School	No Service: No safe drinking water	Limited service: Functional, gender-segregated toile.	No service: no hand washing facility with water and soap available at the time of the survey	sanitary pad is available no appropriate bin provided for menstrual hygiene management in privacy	No thermometer available at the time of assessment, limited plans for infection prevention and controls to ensure preparedness in the case of another national outbreak	There is garbage bin for waste disposal and no dump site for proper garbage disposal
Soul Clinic Community School	There is drinking water from an improved source	Functional, gender-segregated toilet in deplorable condition	hand washing facility available with water and soap available at the time of the survey	sanitary pad is available for female student usage	No thermometer available at the time of assessment, limited plans for infection prevention	There is garbage bin for waste disposal.

					and controls to ensure preparedness in the case of another national outbreak	
Rev. Mark H. Parker School	No safe drinking water	Functional, gender-segregated toilet in a good condition	handwashing facility available no water and soap available at the time of the survey	sanitary pad available or appropriate bin provided for menstrual hygiene management in privacy	No thermometer available at the time of assessment, limited plans for infection prevention and controls to ensure preparedness in the case of another national outbreak	garbage bin for waste disposal, no dump site for proper garbage disposal
Peace Island Model public school	There is drinking water from an improved source	Functional, gender-segregated toilet.	handwashing facility with water and soap available at the time of the survey; and no budgetary allocation for sustainable hygiene	sanitary pad available no appropriate bin provided for menstrual hygiene management in privacy	No thermometer available at the time of assessment, limited plans for infection prevention and controls to ensure preparedness in the case of another national outbreak	There is garbage bin for waste disposal and no dump site for proper garbage disposal
Dixville public school	There is drinking water from an improved source	Improved sanitation facilities and usable (available, functional, and private)	There is handwashing facility but not functional at the time of the survey	There is sanitary pad and others toiletries with appropriate bin provided for menstrual hygiene management in privacy	No thermometer available at the time of assessment, limited plans for infection prevention and controls to ensure	There is a bin for garbage waste and disposal no dump site for proper garbage disposal; garbage is been burn

					preparedness in the case of another national outbreak	which creates a carbon footprint that is harmful to the environment
Upper Caldwell community school	There is drinking water from an improved source	Functional, gender-segregated toilet.	no handwashing facility with water and soap available at the time of the survey; and no budgetary allocation for sustainable hygiene management	There is availability of sanitary pad and bin menstrual hygiene management.	There is thermometer available at the time of assessment, but not been use by the school, limited plans for infection prevention and controls to ensure preparedness in the case of another national outbreak	There is garbage bin, no dumpsite for proper waste disposal; waste disposal includes burning which creates a carbon footprint that is harmful to the environment
Gibraltar public School	No safe drinking water, but students have been encouraged daily to bring water in their bottle	There is Functional, gender-segregated toilet that is friendly and in a good usable condition	There is handwashing facility with water and soap available at the time of the survey	There is sanitary pad and appropriate bin provided for menstrual hygiene management in privacy along with a janitress taken care	There was a functional thermometer available at the time of assessment, along with a plan to manage infection and controls to ensure preparedness in the case of another national	There is garbage bin for waste disposal and no dump site for proper garbage disposal, waste disposal includes burning creating carbon footprint
Amos T. Taybior	Drinking water from an improved source	Functional, gender-segregated toilet.	There is handwashing facility with no water and soap available	There is sanitary pad and a bin menstrual hygiene management in privacy	There is a thermometer but not functional at the time of assessment, limited plans	There is garbage bin, but no dumpsite for proper waste disposal; waste disposal

			at the time of the survey; and no budgetary allocation for sustainable hygiene management		for infection prevention and controls to ensure preparedness in the case of another national outbreak	includes burning which creates a carbon footprint that is harmful to the environment
Harbel Multilateral High school	There is a clean and safe drinking water from an improved source	Improved sanitation facilities that are usable (available, functional, and private)	There is handwashing facilities with water	There is sanitary pad and bin provided for menstrual hygiene management in privacy	No thermometer available at the time of assessment, limited plans for infection prevention and controls to ensure preparedness for another national outbreak	There is garbage bin for waste disposal and no dump site for proper garbage disposal



Pictorial after the alumni intervention



As part of the project faced out an award and closing ceremony was held and brought together the project schools, community dwellers, WASH stakeholders and actors, Schools administrators, media institutions, and a representative from the United States embassy in Monrovia. During the program, the dual alumni thanked and appreciated the schools, and the WASH actors for their contributions and support for the successful implementation of the project and encourage the schools to continue to keep the facilities clean and friendly for all students. Additionally, the schools were agreed to seek out other opportunities to help support the WASH facilities, especially for public schools.

From the post-assessment results and following the international best practices for WASH in school and that of the government of Liberia Water in school policy (WINs) Giberatal public school was awarded as 1st winner evidence while Harbel Multilateral high school emerged as 2nd awardee and Dixville public school as 3rd awardee and all the schools were certificated for their active involvement and participation as well as their contribution toward the successful implementation of the project.

Pictorial below:



Challenges:

- Lack of accurate data by the majority of the schools on the total number of males and females enrolled within the schools.
- Some public schools were not willing to work with the mapping team, based on an instituted mandate by the Ministry of Education that information about public institutions should not be shared with individuals/organizations without written consent from the Ministry of Education.
- School academic schedule.
- The acceptance of the team into the community was a bit challenging at first due to some perceptions of the community dwellers that the team was sent by some political leaders or we have gotten some of the COVID-19 money.
- Some community dwellers that were spoken with refused to have their photos taken.

Recommendations:

The project team and WASH stakeholders collaborate more to provide technical support and needed resources to ensure schools become more responsive and involved in the project for ownership and sustainability.

That ministry of Education and WASH stakeholders collaborates more to monitor schools' WASH facilities and ensure schools (Janitors/janitress) are equipped and duly performing the task.

There should be refresher training and a monitoring team established on campuses to enhance the sustainability of the project ensuring the WASH facilities are well kept and safe water available always.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the project provided an opportunity for a deeper understanding and appreciation of the WASH needs of students, especially females, and the challenges therein not just that but at the same time survey shows that the lack of adequate WASH services in schools is depriving female students of the opportunity to fully access healthy and clean WASH environments and thus it severely affects their health, absence from school, and by extension impacts their cognitive performance as well as showing the level of progress made during the project life cycle. Yet it also helps to inform us as civic actors that there is a lot more to be done in promoting WASH-friendly environments for all, especially in the academic sector. Lastly, the cordial working relationship created amongst the schools, WASH actors created a space for smooth implementation as well as identifying the need for equitable access to safe WASH facilities in educational settings, and improving menstrual hygiene and practices by prioritizing the agenda for WASH stakeholders.