DOCTORS OF AFRICA / MEDECINS D'AFRIQUE
MDA Kenya Country Office

THE WORLD TOILET DAY

MDA KENYA
November 19th 2013

MDA PARTICIPATION IN THE TOILET WORLD DAY; COMMUNITY TOILET CLEAN UP HELD AT ST JOHN'S COMMUNITY CENTER, MAJENGO SLUMS, NAIROBI

NOVEMBER 2013

DOCTORS OF AFRICA / MEDECINS D'AFRIQUE is an international health NGO born in Congo Brazzaville in 1993, more focusing on the promotion of primary health with a special attention to maternal and child health. We have been much operating mostly in french speaking countries such as Congo-Brazzaville, Congo-Kinshasa, Gabon, Chad, Ivory Coast, Guinea, France and in Japan. Kenya is the first English speaking country where we are planning also to bring our contribution in health related issues as well as in the social development of Africa and in particular to the Kenya population.

BACKGROUND

The need for a clean and hygiene toilet is an issue that continues to elicit a lot of attention among governments and interest stakeholders. All over the developing world, awareness of toilet facilities remains very low, despite many resources being directed towards these efforts. The theme for 2013 World Toilet Day was 'Rural Meet the Urban Sanitation' which is aimed at empowering the community to improve better sanitation to alleviate poverty, healthy and hygiene community both in rural and urban society. The obvious adverse effects of poor toilet (or non-toilet use) continue to be felt, with high mortality cases resulting from unhygienic sanitation facilities. With further social, political and economic challenges which continue to face these communities, aggravated with widespread damage of the environment, better toilets in rural and urban areas are very necessary for preventing further pandemics.

NEED ASSESSMENT AND ACTIONS TAKEN

MDA Country Rep Josue Tchishibandji in the spirit of the day; with the discoloured walls behind

Participation

MDA Kenya participated in the World Toilet Day by visiting a local informal urban community, Majengo Slums in Nairobi's Eastlands and cleaning a community toilet used by two schools, primary and secondary and the surrounding community. This was done in partnership with St John's Community Center, a local NGO working in the area MDA made a direct contribution for man power, by sending six people to take part in the event. We also gave in-kind contribution of gloves, masks and detergents which were used by all people. Thereafter, as a humanitarian organization, we felt the need to sensitize the community on health and social issues; and for that matter, we settled on a HIV awareness to the participants.

Target

The population that directly uses the facility include: 320 primary school pupils and a further 160 secondary school students. In addition, being in the center of one of the most populous informal

settlement in Nairobi City, many residents within the school perimeters find their way into the facility.

MDA Staff in Action

Key challenges

During the event several observations were underscored;

- Old dilapidated toilet facility, rugged and worn out
- Insufficient water, hence the atmosphere around the facility being very dirty and stinky.
- The facilities are very few compared to the population of use.
- Generally, the population is very ignorant on good hygiene practices, with waste overflowing (un-flushed), splattered on the floor and smeared walls.

Dr Alex Kaara presenting a HIV awareness after the clean up

CONCLUSION

The main observations made were the need for immediate necessity for sensitization for all pupils and the community regarding best hygiene practices. At the time of the event, the schools had shut and only a few staff members were present. It was unanimously agreed that once schools re-open next year, there must be a deliberate effort to address hygiene and sanitation matters to the pupils, and highlight the dangers associated with poor toilet use.

The team with the clean up gadgets

WAY FORWARD

The Medecins D'Afrique team of Kenya holds the issue of hygiene and sanitation with a lot of concern. With the epidemics resulting from sanitation increasing in Kenya and the African continent, real and sustainable measures and strategies ought to be put in place to bring a lasting change to the community.
As such, MDA will seek to put its effort and support any projects that can bring such change into the communities where we are involved or called upon.

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