



Improving Water, Sanitation & Hygiene in Catholic Health Facilities in Kenya

BRIEF REPORT: JANUARY - AUGUST 2024

I. PROJECT SUMMARY

Kavisuni Catholic Dispensary in Kitui Diocese, Kenya, serves a rural population of 1,350 people with an average daily attendance of 15 patients per day. This is one of the facilities identified for water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) improvements through the initiative led by the Vatican's Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development. The Catholic Relief Services (CRS) organized the entire project, with co-funding from several donors, including Wallace Genetic Foundation and the Catholic Diocese of Stockholm-Sweden, towards realizing this project. The Wallace Genetic Foundation supported training of facility in-charges, preparation and monitoring of WASH improvement action plans for the facility and installation of water connections, reservoir tank and an incinerator; and the patients' latrine was rehabilitated with funding from Wallace Genetic Foundation. In addition to this facility, the Kenya Catholic Health Department is working to strengthen WASH in 208 health facilities and aims to scale WASH support to all 498 Catholic health facilities in Kenya.

The grant from the Catholic Diocese of Stockholm-Sweden enabled construction of a two-door latrine block for staff and construction of a maternity bathroom. This grant ensured assistance that includes sanitation, access to water and hand hygiene for the facility's patients and health care workers. The project was implemented with the Diocese of Kitui.

This project is integrated with the Holy See's Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development's initiative to improve WASH in 150 Catholic healthcare facilities in 23 countries. CRS believes that this initiative is vital to improve health outcomes, reduce the spread of infections, and enhance the quality of care. In sub-Saharan Africa, more than a quarter of health care facilities have no water services, and a third have no sanitation services. Inadequate WASH services compromise patient safety and increase the risk of healthcare-associated infections. Proper WASH services ensure clean water, hygienic environments, and effective waste management, which are essential for maintaining public trust and delivering adequate healthcare.

Wallace Genetic Foundation – according to its president David Wallace Douglas – “views the Dicastery initiative as the most effective current effort in the world to help faith-based hospitals and clinics in low-income countries obtain WASH. The initiative has not only helped dioceses strengthen advocacy, training and implementation on behalf of sustainable WASH improvements in Catholic-run healthcare facilities, it is inspiring other religious traditions to focus long-overdue attention on urgent WASH conditions in their own hospitals and clinics”.

II. ACTIVITIES AT KAVISUNI MISSION DISPENSARY

- **Construction of two-door pit latrine**

Before the project, both health workers and the patient were sharing a block of latrines. The new ventilated improved pit latrine was constructed to serve the facility's staff and to allow separate latrines for staff and for patients. With the training provided to facility staff, they have acquired skills to maintain both the patient and the staff latrines through regular cleaning, immediate fixing of broken parts and maintenance of handwashing stations.

- **Construction of maternity bathroom**

With these funds, the project was able to construct an internal bathroom that also serves as a sluice room for maternity patients which was lacking. The sluice room is fitted with a single flush toilet and a shower tap for convenience of nursing mothers. The bathroom was connected to the water supply system that was previously installed through the aforementioned Wallace Genetic Foundation grant through this initiative to improve WASH in Catholic health facilities.

III. RESULTS OF THE ACTIVITIES AT KAVISUNI MISSION DISPENSARY

Two kinds of results were attained in this project. The quantitative result was that the material constructions were completed within existing budget; hence the needy infrastructure is in place to be used by various kinds of beneficiaries. The qualitative result was that by using the new infrastructure the hygienic conditions have improved that benefit its users, such as the women, health workers and staff. With enhanced hygienic condition it is expected that in the longer term the health will improve among the patients; and the staff will be able to offer better patient care, as well as reduce one's own proneness to catch infections at the premises.

His Eminence, Cardinal Anders Arborelius OCD, Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Stockholm, is a passionate advocate of social justice issues, as conducted within the frame of the Catholic Social Teaching of the church. He says: "Thanks to our back-donors and collaborators, supporting this kind of initiative, which contributes to improve the health of the people in need, especially women, is consistent with the Catholic Faith and Social Justice as proclaimed by the Church. Truly, such practices pertain to Christian love in action".

IV. PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE PROJECT



Father Benson Maluki (Facility Manager) checking the water flow in the newly constructed maternity bathroom.



Old unhygienic toilet block that was out of use before this support. It had developed cracks in the slab and is being decommissioned.



Newly constructed facility staff latrine. Now staff are using safe and hygienic toilets and they have put in place an operations and maintenance plan to keep it working sustainably into the future.



Newly constructed facility patients' latrine. Now the patients are using safe and hygienic toilets and they have put in place an operations and maintenance plan to keep it working sustainably into the future.

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