

WASH in Early Childhood Education in Lao PDR

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Background - ECE in Lao PDR

Early Childhood Education (ECE) is Accepted by Lao Education law

- Nursery 3ms – 3 yrs
- Kindergarten for 3-5 years old children
- Pre-primary class for 5 year old children
- Play Group for 5 year old.
- In Lao PDR, the total number of pre-schools is 3.435.
- In Lao PDR, the total number of students in preschools is nearly 170.000.





Background - ECE in Lao PDR (Continued)

- From 2012 to 2017, ECE was part of the Department of Primary and Preschool Education (DPPE).
- In 2018, DPPE was split into two separate departments and the Department of Early Childhood Education (DECE) was created, while primary education is delegated to the Department of General Education (DGE).
- DPPE's split and the creation of DECE is to improve access to ECE programs for smaller children and better prepare them for primary education.

Scaling-Up WASH to ECE

- Because DECE was once part of DPPE, the department staff are familiar with WASH in Schools (WinS) in the Primary education sub-sector. These experiences can aid the department in implementing WASH in ECE.
- WASH in ECE has been integrated into the 8th Education and Sports Sector Development Plan (ESSDP), therefore DECE was able to request budget from the Government of Lao PDR to orientate WASH in ECE in 3 provinces and adapt the Three Stars Approach for ECE.
- DECE also received support for WASH in ECE from development partners such as GIZ.

Approaches to Scaling-Up WinS

In Lao PDR, the scaling-up of WinS to ECE relies on two main approaches:

- Community-based approach where the community is encouraged to improve WASH facilities for their schools and develop a sense of ownership in implementing WinS.
- The Three Built Strategy of the Government of Lao PDR:
 1. **Province** – The province acts as a strategic unit identifying where to start program and provides a contextualized strategy.
 2. **District** – The district acts as the strengthening unit that works to gather support from all stakeholders, mobilize funds and community participation, and orientate schools on the program.
 3. **Community** – The community participates in the planning process and is the developmental unit that takes ownership to develop children's education and health and support schools in constructing washing facilities.

Differences Between WASH in Primary Education and ECE

Primary Education

- Easier to implement WASH activities in primary education as older students can take up more responsibilities during activities (e.g. turn water taps on/off, cleaning facilities, etc.).

ECE

- The responsibility for implementing WASH activities is focused on the teachers.
- There is a greater need for WASH activities in ECE as smaller children require more supervision to maintain their hygiene.

Capacity Development

- Capacity development is crucial for the successful implementation of WASH in ECE in Lao PDR:
 - Orientation on WASH in ECE are conducted throughout Lao PDR.
 - Learning exchanges at the provincial, district, and school level are organized to share experiences in implementing WASH in ECE.
 - WASH is integrated into the regular DECE yearly meetings.
- Tools have also been developed to support capacity building - these include monitoring tools for WinS and manuals that has been adapted for ECE such as:
 - WinS Standard
 - Three Stars Approach
 - WinS Implementation manual
 - Fit for School manual





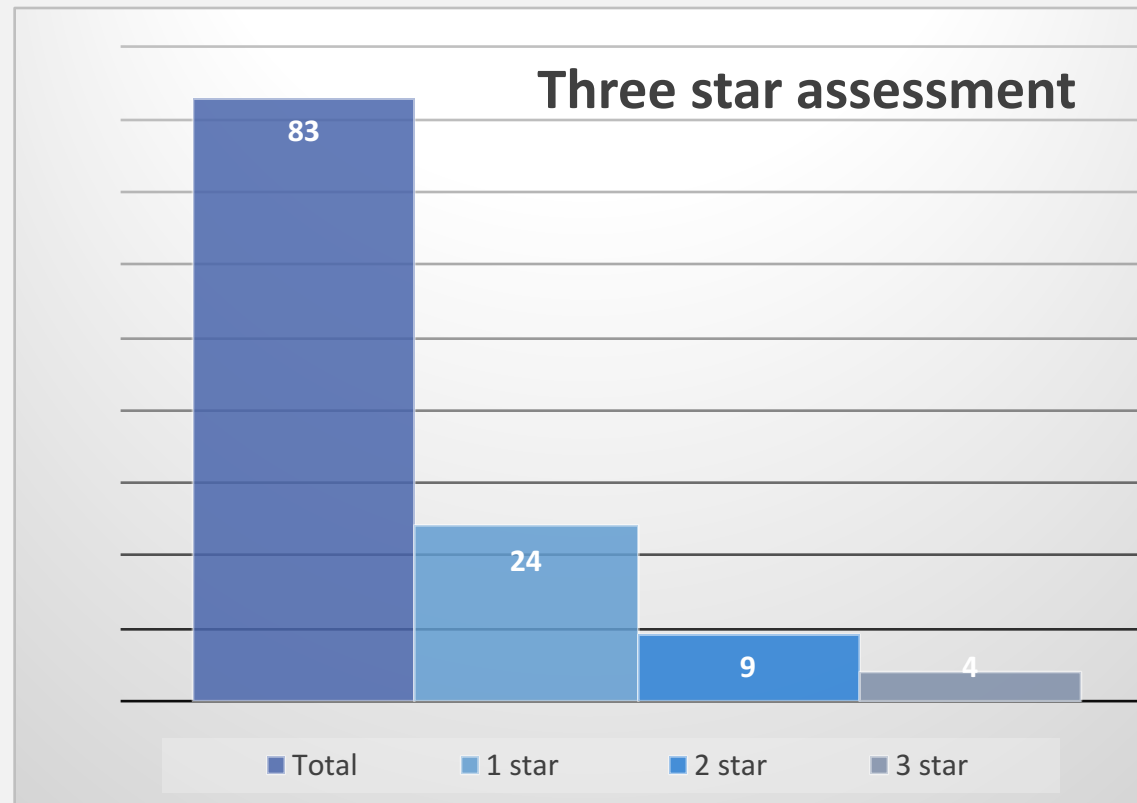
Monitoring and Quality Assurance

The WinS Standards and Three Stars Approach are used as monitoring tools for WinS.

- 83 schools in 6 provinces in Lao PDR currently use the Three Stars Approach to conduct self-assessment of WinS.
- To ensure the quality and accuracy of the results of the monitoring, the self-assessment conducted by schools are also complemented by external assessment.

Results in Lao PDR

➤ **436 Schools implementing Fit For School**



Challenges for WASH in ECE in Lao PDR



Insufficient and poor quality infrastructure for ECE, particularly in remote areas.



Inadequate water supply.



Understanding of WASH within the school community is still limited.



Budgetary constraints.



Next Steps

- Ensure that WinS is included in 9th ESSDP as a priority area.
- Continue to orientate Fit for School to other remaining provinces in Lao PDR.
- Conduct learning exchanges in regular DECE yearly meeting.
- Continue to monitor and scale-up the Three Stars Approach.

Thank you for your attention.

