



UPDATE: PROGRAMME FOR APPROPRIATE LOW-COST URBAN SANITATION 1 – 31 AUGUST 2019

Hepatitis E

Hepatitis E continues expanding in Windhoek and across Namibia. It is a liver infection caused by the Hepatitis E virus and the outbreak was first officially declared in Windhoek on 14th December 2017.

The outbreak is due to deficient sanitary conditions in informal settlements, and mostly transmitted through water that is contaminated with faecal matter. Open defecation, lack of good sanitary practices (such as regular hand washing) and unsafe water storage are therefore the main causes.

At the time of the last census in 2011, some 50% of all informal settlement residents in Namibia were without access to toilets. This indicates the magnitude of open defecation. Ensuring appropriate and financially viable sanitary solutions for Namibia's informal settlements is therefore a priority.

Project development

In May 2018, the Namibian Chamber of Environment (NCE) commissioned an assessment on appropriate urban low-cost sanitation systems in Namibia, implemented by Development Workshop Namibia (DWN). With additional support from the GEF Small Grants Programme, and based on the results of the survey, DWN then initiated the construction of best practice demonstration toilets. Built in Oshakati and Okahao, the demonstration toilets were integrated in so called 'sanitation centres' that involve local residents and promote good sanitation practices.

Windhoek Sanitation Programme

At the same time, the Ministry of Health and Social Services, City of Windhoek, Constituency Councils of Samora Machel and Moses Garoeb, WHO, UNICEF and UNDP were preparing a major sanitation programme in Windhoek. The objective

of the programme is to eliminate open defecation in the city's informal settlements and end the Hepatitis E outbreak.

The programme adopted a methodology called 'Community Led Total Sanitation', or CLTS. The methodology uses a community bottom up approach, sensitizing informal settlement residents of the dangers of open defecation and encouraging the construction of latrines according to guidelines as provided by the City of Windhoek.

The concept of sanitation centres fits perfectly with CLTS, and on 8 August DWN was engaged by UNICEF and UNDP to implement several components of the Windhoek sanitation programme, including the construction of sanitation centres, GIS mapping of sanitation infrastructure, and the implementation of information campaigns.

Since project inception two sanitation centres have already been built, and a big programme launch and inaugural event held by Government



and UN agencies. The programme has now begun its roll-out through the Samora Machel and Moses Garoeb constituencies. Updates on programme expansion will be provided on a monthly basis.



Sanitation centre in Nalitungue, Moses Garoeb Constituency, and a demonstration pit latrine