

Could school hygiene programme have an impact on improving community's hygiene?

Mr. Sahbudin, School Principal of SDN Balebrang believes that changing personal hygiene behaviour of students will have an impact to the community. Based on this opinion, he -- supported by all teachers especially Mr. Abdul Gani who was appointed to supervise school health programme -- launched School Hygiene Programme in this school in 2003. In 2008 he asked District Education Office to use School Operational Fund or Bantuan Operasional Sekolah (BOS) for rehabilitation of school building and the implementation of school hygiene.



SDN Balebrang,
Sumbawa

The result of this programme is significant. Before 2003, the condition of school facilities was very bad such as lack of sanitation facilities, bad hygiene behaviour of students and teachers and ruined school building. Now, the school looks very clean and green, no garbage in the yard, plants and flowers grow well and none of teachers and visitors have smoking in the area of school.

The school hygiene programme consisted of 4 activities: (1) Abhorrence for garbage movement; (2) Little doctor and Student Hygiene Club; (3) Health School Canteen and Health Fund; and (4) School Library. However, Mr. Sahbudin said: *"Good school facilities and good hygiene promotion are useless without providing sanitation facilities. Water for watering flowers and plants, proper school latrine, trash bin and regulation should be provided. So, assistance from UNICEF to construct school latrine and IEC materials for promoting hand washing have really supported our programme"*.

The first activity, abhorrence for garbage movement, resulted no students and teachers throw trash on the floor or yard. They throw it into trash bins. Every day students and teachers come to school at 06:30 and clean the school including class rooms and school latrine, watering flowers and plants, and put garbage in the trash bins. School begins at 07:30.

The little doctors are students who were selected to monitor school condition and mobilize students to clean the school. They also conduct hygiene promotion. Supported by their teacher, little doctors have also conducted health monitoring of the community. They presented and discussed with the community on the results of monitoring. They asked heads of hamlet and communities to follow up the results of their monitoring. As a result several families have already constructed their own family latrine.

When VoC reporter visited this school, he also observed School Canteen. Foods have been served cleanly. Each student who spent his/her money for foods should save some of it in Health Fund (Dana Sehat). This fund has been well managed and used for buying medicines for students when they got sick.

Since 2008 UNICEF has supported this school with 2 activities as mentioned by Mr. Sahbudin. Those activities are under School Sanitation and Promoting Hygiene (SSPH) Programme. The main activities of this programme are construction of school latrine, training for teachers on hygiene promotion, providing IEC materials, supporting school activities to monitor sanitation condition of community surrounding the school and hand washing campaign activity. School latrine was constructed because previous school latrine has only two toilets that were not enough to accommodate 170 students and 26 teachers. New school latrines that supported by UNICEF is 6x5 square meters consisted of 4 rooms and facility for handwashing.

Nita Susanti and Silvia, 6th grade students, were interviewed by VoC reporter. Both students said that they are happy and proud in implementing SSPH programme. Their knowledge on hygiene is improved. The new school latrine is more comfortable and sufficient to accommodate all students and teachers. They also have experience in collecting data on sanitation condition of the community and shared the result with the community.



Mr. Abdul Gani, Nita Susanti and
Silvia in front of school latrine

Mr. Sahbudin, Mr. Abdul Gani and students are very confident to participate in the health school competition at district as well as province level. In the past, they were rather pessimistic because of unavailability of proper sanitation facilities.

Where is SDN Balebrang? It is located in Balebrang village, Utan sub-district, Sumbawa district, West Nusa Tenggara province. This village is 35 kilometers from Sumbawa Besar, the capital of Sumbawa district. Number of students in this school is 170 children consists of 88 boys and 82 girls. Number of teachers is 26 persons consists of 16 males and 10 females.

As the highest education institution at village level, SDN Balebrang can contribute in changing community health behaviour especially in hygiene and sanitation. At least knowledge and practice of children on hygiene have been increased.....*****



Students are practicing hand washing