



# WATER IN ACTION

Partnerships

Knowledge

Solutions

## WSUP is making a difference to the lives of the urban poor – Briena's story

Water and Sanitation for the Urban Poor (WSUP) are working in a number of cities in Africa to improve the water, sanitation and hygiene conditions for the urban poor. Borouge and Borealis became members of WSUP in 2007 as part of their "Water for the World" initiative in order to help them make a real difference to these people's lives.

This is Briena's story, where the eleven year old school girl explains how the improvements to the school sanitation facilities under the WSUP supported Tchemulane project have impacted her life. She now feels relaxed and concentrates better in lessons in the knowledge that she can go to the toilet when she needs to and is able to wash her hands afterwards and no longer fears becoming sick.



*Water and Sanitation for the Urban Poor (WSUP) is a partnership between the private sector, civil society and academia focussed on addressing the increasing global problem of inadequate access to water and sanitation for the urban poor and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goal targets, particularly those relating to water and sanitation. Borouge and Borealis became members of WSUP in 2007 as part of their "Water for the World" initiative in order to help them make a real difference to these people's lives.*

defecated outside. I have been a student at this school for 7 years but, until recently, I had never used the facilities. When I needed the toilet, I would leave school and go to a friend's house. I didn't use the school toilets because I was afraid of getting sick. Sometimes I would have to wait a long time before going to the toilet, but I preferred to suffer than go to the school toilets. We didn't have a regular water supply at school. We just had one tap which was used by all the students and the cleaning staff. We had to wait in a queue and fight to get water to drink. The water supply was unreliable and sometimes it was cut so the students attending the afternoon shift would have to go without water."

### The WSUP project will make a real difference

Things are much better following the project as Briena explains: "We are no longer afraid to use the toilets because they are kept clean and they don't smell bad. They are cleaned by staff at least once in the morning period. I have no problem asking the teacher if I can go to the toilet and I don't have to leave lessons to go to my friend's house. We have a proper place to wash our hands after using the toilet. We also have two more taps with regular water supply so we don't have to fight to get water anymore."

"We are very happy with the improvement of our sanitation facilities and water supply. With these improvements, I hope that we will avoid the transmission of diseases such as diarrhoea and cholera and improve the health of all the students at the school. I think my education will improve as a result of the new facilities. I no longer have to wait for a long time without going to the toilet or miss out on teaching time to go to the toilet at my friend's house. Now, when I come to school, I feel relaxed and concentrate better in lessons. When I need to go to the toilet, I ask the teacher, I go, and I am able to wash my hands afterwards."

Each day 180,000 people migrate to the large cities around the world and by 2030, it is estimated that 60% of the world's population will live in urban areas. WSUP are working with local service providers, both public and private, to improve the life of those living in poor conditions in a number of cities in Africa – in this article eleven year old Briena explains the impact that their work has had on her life.

### Poor sanitation was seriously effecting Briena's education

Briena is a student at the local Primary School in one of the poorest neighbourhoods in Maputo, the capital of Mozambique in south east Africa. The school, which was opened in 1975, is attended by over 4,500 students in two shifts. Following a detailed survey and assessment, the WSUP supported Tchemulane project selected the school as a demonstration programme to improve the existing sanitation facilities and establish sustainable operation and management services.

The toilet facilities at the school were very poor which was effecting Briena's education, as she explained: "The toilets at school have always been bad. There was an awful smell, they were always very dirty and we didn't have a reliable water supply. Many students urinated and



**WSUP**  
Water & Sanitation  
for the Urban Poor



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