



WATER IN ACTION

Partnerships

Knowledge

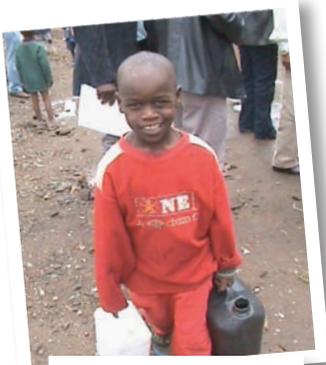
Solutions

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

Water and Sanitation for the Urban Poor (WSUP) is a non-profit partnership between the private sector, NGOs and research institutions focused on solving the global problem of inadequate water and sanitation in low-income urban communities. Borouge and Borealis became members of WSUP in 2007 as part of their "Water for the World" initiative.

In the Kotei district of Kumasi, Ghana, there was no main water supply and people had to collect water from unapproved and unregulated independent water suppliers. It usually fell to school children who spent many hours each day fetching water for their homes and schools. Collecting water usually took priority over study, resulting in low school performance levels and high school drop-out rates, especially for girls. In this story 12 year old Suzy Pokkuua describes the impact of the building of new standpipes as part of the Oforikom programme, which is supported by WSUP.





WSUP
Water & Sanitation
for the Urban Poor

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Kumasi is the capital city of the Ashanti region, which is a very important and historical centre for Ghana and is visited by many tourists each year. However like many cities in Africa there are many poor communities living outside the city centre where basic services such as water and sanitation are sub-standard. One example in Kumasi is the urban area of Kotei where water supply presented a major challenge for the entire community. Until recently, there was no water supplied to Kotei by Kumasi’s main water utility, which meant that the community was forced to use water from unapproved and unregulated independent water suppliers.

Suzy’s education suffers because she spent many hours collecting water

School children spent many hours each day fetching water for their homes and schools as the suppliers are often located some distance away. Collecting water often takes priority over study, resulting in low school performance levels and high school drop-out rates, especially for girls. Twelve year old Suzy Pokkuuaa is a student at Kotei Roman Catholic Basic School, one of the locations selected for a new standpipe as part of the Oforikom programme, which is supported by Water and Sanitation for the Urban Poor (WSUP).

“I live with my parents and my four brothers and one sister. We don’t have a water pipe at our house so we have to walk to a pipe to collect the water we need. My sister and youngest brother and I collect the water every day after school. The walk to the pipe is 15 minutes and we go three times. It takes two hours - it’s very long, but I don’t complain because we need the water to bath and cook. I must fetch the water before I start my homework. Sometimes I don’t start my homework until eight o’clock in the evening. It’s very late and I’m tired, so I find my homework difficult. I also must collect water when I’m at school from the Church nearby. I fetch the water when the teacher asks me, which is usually every day. I will be happy when the new pipe at the school is working so I can focus on my school work.”

A brighter future for Suzy and her brothers and sisters

As part of the African Cities for the Future (ACF) program, WSUP worked with the main water utility in Kumasi to provide a 50 cubic metre high-level tank in Kotei. The tank distributes water from two mechanized bore holes and there are eight public stand pipes located throughout the community. The locations of the public stand pipes were selected with the assistance of the community and are well distributed throughout Kotei to ensure that everyone in the community can access water conveniently. The new standpipes greatly improve the community’s access to clean and safe water and reduce the amount of time school children spend fetching water both at school and at home – which will greatly help them with their education.

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To know more about WSUP,
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