

Halifax Gala

Impact Report



The 2020 Chefs for UNICEF Water for Life Gala in Halifax raised **\$128,500** dollars.

Handwashing using soap and water is one of the most effective ways of preventing the spread of disease, including COVID-19. It is also a key condition for schools to be able to reopen and operate safely in the midst of the ongoing pandemic. Yet 2 in 5 schools worldwide lacked basic handwashing facilities prior to the coronavirus outbreak, putting nearly 818 million children at increased risk of COVID-19 and other infectious illnesses. The risk is particularly high for children in the least developed countries, where 7 out of 10 schools lack basic handwashing facilities and half of schools lack basic sanitation and drinking water services.

The Chefs for UNICEF Water for Life Gala supports UNICEF's global water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) programs, benefiting hundreds of thousands of children, families and communities who need this support more than ever before. The event raised \$300,000 in 2019 and \$128,500 in 2020 even though we were not able to hold an in person event.



How Water Helps Keep Girls in School

School drop-out in Uganda is particularly pronounced during early adolescence with children aged 10-13. Only 32 per cent of children complete primary school and of that group, only one third end up graduating from high school. **Sadly, less than half of this small number of high school graduates are girls.**

UNICEF's programs are focused in the most vulnerable districts of the West Nile where the graduation rates are well below the national average and where the situation is now compounded by the large influx of refugees from South Sudan.

To address the issue of girls' school drop-out, the program directly addresses several key causes related to gender factors. This includes the need for better sanitation facilities and improved Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) in schools and the prevalent gender norms that cause girls, their teachers and their families to limit girls' interest, ambition and confidence in education. This is especially so for traditionally 'male' dominated subjects such as STEM, which are critical to progress in secondary education.

Girls who drop out of school have an increased risk of child marriage and early pregnancy, of engaging in illegal or unsafe work, or being subjected to transactional sex and unsafe sexual relations, all limiting the realization of their full potential and representing a staggering loss of future economic benefits. UNICEF has a proven track record of interventions that are known to dramatically improve girls' participation and

completion of education. The Government of Uganda is committed to improving educational outcomes for girls and UNICEF is supporting two key interventions through the UNdaunted Campaign investment.

UNICEF Uganda is focused on two main interventions: **1) improving the availability of appropriate sanitation and washing facilities for girls in 40 schools in the West Nile region;** and **2) improving the knowledge, attitudes and practices of girls, teaching staff and community members in 550 schools to challenge negative gender norms that affect adolescent girls' participation in education by working with a local implementing partner to offer clubs for girls and boys at school and in the community.**

In 2019 there was tremendous learning about the implementation of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) infrastructure and we are pleased to share that the girls themselves participated in the design and improvements that will be included in future construction. Introducing WASH facilities in school settings has unparalleled impact in the lives of all children, particularly for girls and the community. UNICEF improves or builds latrines and washing facilities that are child and disability friendly and gender



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Adolescent girls share a laugh together at Afoji Primary School in Moyo District, Northern Uganda.

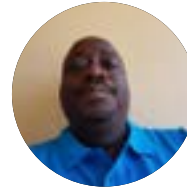
sensitive. Washing facilities at school mean that girls can continue to learn instead of staying home during menstruation. Equally important to a young girls' development and dignity, as she matures and develops physically, is the value of dedicated girls' latrines and washing facilities. With the installation of a community water tap at the school, children are able to attend classes instead of spending the day collecting water for their families.

One key design lesson learned was the need to provide girls with a place to dispose sanitary materials to minimize the stigma of dealing with their period. An incinerator attached to the latrines to ease disposal of sanitary pads will

now be included in the design moving forward. In addition, the children asked for handwashing facilities to be accessible for children of different heights, an important feature when children in primary schools range from age 5-14 in one school. A community tap has also been introduced and connected to the school water systems, contributing to improved maintenance and protection of the infrastructure by the community. By providing the community with access to safe water, through the school, the result is a greater respect and appreciation by community members for their children's education and reduced student absenteeism due to water collection.

Staff Story – Insights from the Field

Meet Paul Semakula, WASH Specialist, West Nile Region, UNICEF Uganda



In your opinion, what has been the most impactful aspect of this Canadian investment so far?

The funds given by Canadians has given us, UNICEF Uganda the opportunity to introduce and pilot new innovative designs for WASH improvements in schools. We are able to specifically improve WASH facilities to meet the needs of girls.

We were able to find a way to connect the girls' washrooms to water supplies, install shower facilities, build incinerators for disposal of used sanitary materials, and construct handwashing facilities. Latrines and taps were constructed in locations that are easily accessible by girls and boys, while providing enough privacy for students. In addition, water supply systems that harness solar energy were installed at schools and in communities to reduce the time students need to spend collecting water.

The improvements have been well received by the school authorities, students and communities. We are now looking forward to rolling out these improvements to more schools.

What has been a personal highlight for you working on the UNdaunted Campaign programs over the last year?

I would say that a highlight is seeing the impact of these programs on girls' access to and

participation in education. In addition to the WASH facilities, girls are engaged in activities on menstrual hygiene management, including training on best hygiene practices and how to make reusable sanitary pads. The girls have gained skills that allow them to manage their menstruation privately and with dignity.

It has also been really eye-opening to see the inclusion of boys in the menstrual hygiene management sessions at schools. I have spoken with boys in the school clubs and it is clear that now they understand the importance and support that they need to provide to the girls. This

understanding helps create better acceptance in the school.

Also, the senior women teachers have expressed great thanks for the provision of a washroom with water supply. One senior woman teacher that I interacted with said that the washroom and water supply was a great relief because it provides a personal safe space for girls.

This is important because girls no longer have to carry water from a borehole to the washroom. Collecting water used to be really challenging for girls, especially during peak hours, as they had to wait in long lines, causing them to miss class time. Now they do not need to worry about collecting water and instead they can be in class with their peers learning.

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By the Numbers:

Achievements in Uganda in 2019

Program Goals	Program Target (2018-2021)	2019 Program Results	Impact
Improve the availability of appropriate sanitation and washing facilities for adolescent girls in 40 schools.	40 Schools	12 schools received WASH (11 had no water before)	6,839 students have access to WASH 3,884 boys 2,995 girls
		8 schools have trained facility management committees	39 men and 17 women received maintenance training
Improve the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of girls, teaching staff and community members in 550 schools to challenge negative gender norms that affect adolescent girls' participation in education	550 schools	280 schools have begun the intervention	Engaged 1,301 teachers (442 women, 859 men)
		267 schools have trained teachers on their role in helping children, on school club formation, guidelines and activities, and Key Family Care Practices.	Trained 972 teachers (581 men, 391 women)
		280 school clubs were established, incorporating life skills training in their activities including educative drama, writing songs and poems, debating, peer-to-peer discussions, health talks, counselling and referrals.	27,112 adolescents (6,770 girls, 20,352 boys) have been trained and are actively engaged through school clubs
		150 schools engaged with health workers to empower adolescents with information on reproductive health services from the nearest health facilities and make referrals.	A total of 20,272 students (9,525 girls and 10,747 boys) were actively engaged
		621 parents and caregivers trained on parenting skills, Key Family Care Practices and life skills for adolescent girls.	265 women, 356 men trained

Thank you for your support!

The provision of water at schools is one of the 'highly effective practices in increasing access and learning outcomes', especially for girls. In addition to the necessity of water to maintain personal and environmental hygiene, reducing student dehydration in schools has been associated with improved cognitive abilities.

Thank you Halifax! During the evening of the 2019 Chefs for UNICEF Water for Life Gala, 46 water pumps and 323 water for life bundles were sold. Each water pump can provide clean water to a community of 150 people for up to 10 years.

This means that 6,900 people will have access to safe water for drinking, cooking and personal hygiene for up to a decade. Maintenance trainings for community members will also ensure that the pumps remain functional and continue to serve those who need them most.

For 29 years, the Chefs for UNICEF Water for Life Gala in Halifax has supported the greatest needs of children around the world. **Thank you for your tremendous support.**

For more information please contact:

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Students raise their hands in class at Umwia Primary School in Adjumani District, Northern Uganda. The school is benefiting from UNICEF-supported WASH software and hardware and an adolescent development program.