FROM THEM TO US, FOR LIFE WITH CHILDREN

CHILD MORTALITY IN KENYA

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CONTEXT

Kenya
• Located in East Africa on the equator (Indian Ocean to the East)
• Population of 41 million people, growing at 2.5% per year
• Land is abundant with natural resources (e.g. limestone, salt, gemstones, wildlife, zinc etc.)

BUT....
• GDP: $31.4 billion, due to corrupt government, poor structure and areas land-locked with no trade routes
• Over 60% of people in Kenya live in slum settlements

Background on Child Mortality


diarrhea
• Lack of safe water and sanitation leads to half of the child deaths

Sanitation in Kenya

• Access to piped water covers less than 40% of the urban population and reaches only 13.4% of rural residents
• Residents lack access to plumbing, toilets, and standard hygiene and defecate in publically inhabited areas

A 3 PART QUESTION

✓ What is the key problem associated with sanitation in Kenya?
✓ Has external assistance received to-date helped?
✓ Are there better ways to help Kenya improve sanitation? in order to reduce child mortality?

EVIDENCE

The BIG Problem

Key problem associated with poor sanitation is diarrhea

Government says ...
• Diarrhea causes dehydration leading to death
• Improved water supply and sanitation reduces diarrhea morbidity by 25%

International Agencies say...
• Diarrhea is most common in autumn, due to rainfall
• WaterAid: water and sanitation projects have decreased as a proportion of total aid from rich to poor countries in the last 20 years

Media says...
• Diarrhea is the third leading cause of death of children under 5 in Kenya
• Small group initiatives such as the Atlanta-based Global Soap Project promote sanitation for children and reduce spread of diarrheal disease

UNICEF says:
• Immunization is the best way to reduce child mortality
• 2.2 million people will be provided with access to safe water within 3 months (in the horn of Africa)

External Help

Oral rehydration therapy and vaccines that will protect against rotavirus

World Health Organization

However these are not long term solutions!

So instead...

World Health Organization says:
• Improve local water use patterns, including new methods of storing and transporting water and waste
• Beneficiaries end up selling waste removal technologies, rendering aid ineffective

CONCLUSIONS

• Biggest factor causing child mortality in Kenya is poor sanitation leading to diarrheal infection resulting in death
• External assistance both internationally and nationally do not have enough initiative, funding or research in order to be effective
• Participation and cooperation within these aid-needed communities must be improved for long-term solutions to be established
• The focus must be put on prevention, rather than 'post-aid' (i.e. new disposal systems rather than vaccinations for preventable infections)

REFERENCES


RECOMMENDATIONS

International Agencies
• Increase research on ways to improve problems of waste disposal and hand washing
• Budget new technologies like composting toilets for slums
• Understand driving factors for the lack of community participation and educate Kenyans on good hygiene practices

Kenyan Communities
• Cooperation and participation to yield long-term results
• Increase research and awareness
• Know that small initiatives make a difference


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