

Review of: "Examining Water Use and Sanitation Practices in Rural Schools of Chegutu District, Mashonaland West Province, Zimbabwe"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The paper addresses a significant topic: the sanitation services and hygiene practices (WASH) in rural schools in Zimbabwe. WASH is a major issue for schoolchildren. Their well-being, as well as a healthy learning environment, is directly related to access to safe water and adequate sanitation services. In addition, adequate hygiene practices prevent diseases and promote health both at schools and at home. Therefore, studies that provide data about WASH in schools, especially in rural settlements in developing countries, where more vulnerable conditions are expected, are welcomed. However, the manuscript will benefit from a few corrections/alterations as follows:

- Page 2, the author mentioned the "MDG about water and sanitation". This is an old goal. The author should discuss the new SDG regarding sanitation and hygiene: Goal 6: Ensure access to water and sanitation for all;
- Page 2, the author mentioned "water born diseases". This is an old concept also. We prefer to use Diseases Related to Inadequate Environmental Sanitation (DRIES), which is a broader, more inclusive concept - See Cairncross & Feachem, 1993;
- Page 2, there is a typo, "common";
- Page 3, the author discusses MDGs. I do not believe it is necessary to discuss MDGs since we have SDGs to be achieved!
- Page 7, How were the possible biases treated during interviews? Since the officials interviewed had an obvious interest to show a good picture regarding WASH in schools, the author must discuss the possible limitations of the methods used;
- Page 7, the author should describe what a school health master is;
- Page 7, regarding the secondary data used in the research, it is important to state which institutions produced the secondary data used, to check for possible conflicts of interest;
- Page 8, the author gave no data regarding students' characteristics besides gender. It should give more details;
- Page 20, the author stated that "no water quality testing was conducted". This issue is fundamental. Without water quality data, it is impossible to assess water safety;
- Page 21, the Author must explain why those schools were chosen for the study, which includes explaining what marginalized schools from resettlement areas means.

