

ENGINE Rapidly Translates WASH Formative Research into Project Implementation

Erika Lutz, ENGINE's Deputy Chief of Party (DCOP) shared exciting new water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) observation findings with regional nutrition and livelihood teams at a detailed planning meeting on May 21, 2014. By the end of the workshop, the five project sub-offices had developed concrete WASH action plans based on the study recommendations, which will be rapidly scaled-up in 83 districts over the next four months.

When asked why ENGINE is focusing on WASH, the participants readily explained that strengthening WASH integration into ongoing nutrition interventions is part of the project's overall aim to prevent stunting during the first 1,000 days – from the start of pregnancy until the child reaches 2 years.

Ian Moise, Save-US WASH advisor underscored the importance of pairing nutrition and WASH. *"Nutrition and WASH are the mother and father of a healthy start to life and reducing stunting – one cannot work without the other."* ENGINE's WASH advisor, Tesfaye Mekonnen also emphasized the importance of WASH and nutrition, *"We have to stop seeing WASH as independent from other methods of tackling malnutrition. We need to relate it to nutrition and other sectors."*

Peace Corps Volunteers and ENGINE staff who had participated in the project's unique WASH observation study conducted in April 2014 also shared valuable lessons learned from the rapid field research such as the critical role of older siblings in caring for children under-2 and the influential role of health extension workers in promoting household WASH practices. They also commented on the synergistic partnership between ENGINE and Peace Corps and the importance of continued collaboration on WASH documentation and implementation.

Based on the study findings, the project team identified the following priority nutrition-WASH actions that will be rolled-out in all four target regions over the next four months: separating animals and humans; promoting clean playing and eating areas for children under-2; identifying opportunities to target primary school children who have siblings under-2; piloting WASH practices through community conversations; and providing on-the-job WASH and nutrition technical updates for health and agriculture extension workers.



Above: Erika Lutz, ENGINE DCOP and Ian Moise Save-US WASH advisor discuss ways to use WASH study findings to guide project implementation.



Above: ENGINE WASH advisor Tesfaye Mekonnen guiding group discussions