



SANITATION
FOR MILLIONS



Toilets Making the Grade®

A School Competition for Self-driven
Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Improvements

The Toilets Making the Grade® (TMG) competition helps schools to address sanitation and hygiene challenges through self-assessment, guiding them to meet global and national standards like the 3-star approach. In a playful way, students and other school actors form teams to develop and implement their own solutions. By involving local and national governments, TMG fosters a Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) systems approach, enhancing awareness and skills. The competition provides new insights to implementers and government staff, improving WASH investments in schools. It has high potential for strong publicity outcomes on WASH in schools. Originally developed in Germany, TMG has been adapted internationally and is implemented jointly with the German Toilet Organization (GTO).

Key Impacts

- **School-Level:**
 - **Improved Educational Outcomes:** TMG facilitates better educational outcomes by creating healthier learning environments through school-driven hygiene and sanitation improvements, supported by local government and national backing. As menstrual health and hygiene (MHH) can be incorporated as a topic by the schools, school absenteeism and dropouts of female students can be reduced through TMG.
 - **Health and Wellbeing:** TMG enhances student wellbeing and dignity by reducing disease transmission and fostering menstrual hygiene management, allowing students to focus on learning.
 - **Cohesion and Agency:** The collaborative competition process strengthens cohesion and agency among school actors.
 - **Broad Reach:** TMG enables the involvement of hundreds of schools with minimal individual support.
 - **Motivation through Recognition:** Schools are driven to improve by the prospect of attractive prizes and recognition.
 - **Sustainable Practices:** TMG encourages the implementation of sustainable operation and maintenance of facilities, as well as improved hygiene practices, such as better cleaning schedules, use of liquid soap, and group handwashing.
 - **Innovation:** TMG presents an opportunity for innovative Behaviour Change Communication through competitions compared to the traditional awareness measures. It ignites creativity for innovative solutions for WASH challenges in a sustainable manner.
 - **Competitiveness:** Schools are motivated to think outside the box to compete with counterparts in finding solutions. This breeds peer-exchange and peer to peer learning.
 - **Home grown best practices:** Through the TMG competitions, simple and scalable best practices are collected and made available to the responsible school sector authorities.
- **Local Government Involvement:**
 - **Capacity Building:** TMG involves local authorities as implementers or jury members, fostering learning through insights to schools' perspectives and interaction with other departments and WASH in Schools (WinS) actors.
 - **Targeted Support:** TMG enhances local governments' capacities to regulate, monitor, and support WinS, leading to better-targeted budgeting and services. TMG can support the introduction of standards and prioritization of WASH aspects during school monitoring initiatives.
 - **Breaking Silos:** The concept of TMG can be adopted in other programs and sectors to achieve additional impact.

- **Public and Political Engagement:**
 - **Media:** TMG generates advocacy for change through media coverage, as the topic is novel and draws public interest.
 - **High-Level Support:** TMG involves high-level officials and celebrities, bringing WinS into the spotlight and engaging decision-makers across different levels.
 - **National level programming:** Integration of selected TMG aspects into other nationwide competitions increases their anchoring at the national level in other contexts.

Addressing school hygiene and sanitation comprehensively through TMG strengthens students' health, local government involvement, and public and political support, ultimately leading to sustained improvements in the educational environment.

Our Services

Toilets Making the Grade consists of seven work packages:

- **Work Package 1: Design**
Scope, general approach and collaborating partners are defined. Collaborating partners, including government, sponsors, and idols, are brought on board.
- **Work Package 2: Preparation**
The core implementers team determines the detailed approach and develops the materials. The wider implementers team is involved, and the competition is kicked off together.
- **Work Package 3: Dissemination**
Schools are informed about the competition, how to participate and get motivated to do so pro-actively.
- **Work Package 4: Supporting Schools**
Troubleshooting is provided to schools when facing difficulties with the tasks for the submission. A common orientation day or on-site facilitation can increase participation.
- **Work Package 5: Jury Process**
The implementers team selects eligible entries, the jury assesses all eligible written proposals, and probably visits selected schools to verify the results of proposed solutions.
- **Work Package 6: Awarding and Media**
The award ceremony celebrates the schools' efforts and results. The event is the best opportunity to get the media on board for publicity and political engagement.
- **Work Package 7: Post Competition**
After the competition, schools receive pending prizes, documentation is finalized and new partnerships for WinS are followed up. An impact evaluation is scheduled for the following year or term.

Target Groups

- **Learners and school actors:** All learners at participating schools benefit from a healthier learning environment through improved hygiene and sanitation. The participatory process empowers TMG team members - including learners, teachers, maintainers, and school management - by increasing awareness and ownership for lasting impact.
- **Local government and other jury members:** The jury members increase their knowledge and skills to support schools and awareness around WinS. This should include local government, as well as other actors entrusted with WinS-related tasks or topics.

- **Public and political sphere (high level public agencies):** Through the media, an effect can be achieved towards the general public and the political sphere within a country by emphasising the importance of WinS for health, dignity and educational outcomes.

Prerequisites for Implementation

To provide the service successfully, the internal and external conditions listed below are met.

Must-haves:

- **Deep understanding of the TMG approach:** The core and wider implementation teams have a comprehensive grasp of the TMG methodology to ensure effective execution.
- **Consent and support from authorities:** Formal approval from local authorities and the Ministry of Education is essential for implementing TMG activities in schools without any political, societal, or religious objections.
- **Alignment with school calendars:** Activities are strategically scheduled to align with the school calendar, ensuring smooth integration with vacation, holidays, exam periods, and other events.
- **Champions to drive the process:** Dedicated champions on both the implementers' and government sides are crucial to spearhead and sustain the TMG initiatives.
- **Motivational strategies:** Attractive prizes and positive communication are employed to encourage school participation in the competition.
- **Adequate preparation time and capacity:** Sufficient time and resources are planned and available to thoroughly prepare for and execute the competition effectively.
- **Effective dissemination of TMG information:** The ability to communicate TMG processes to schools, which have the capacities and can be motivated to participate, is given.
- **Coordination mechanism:** Better communication and involvement among key actors at the different levels ensures achievement of TMG intended outputs at scale.

Desirable:

- **Government ownership:** Active government involvement throughout the TMG implementation process ensures sustainability and long-term impact.
- **Harmonization with other organizations:** Coordination with other entities working in the same intervention areas prevents duplication and fosters synergy.
- **Internet and associated hardware:** Easy access to the internet is important for schools and jury members to utilize the TMG web portal effectively (for the online option).
- **Baselines/assessments:** Schools should be able to provide their WASH baseline information during development of the proposals upon which solutions are developed and impact ascertained.
- **National WinS standards:** The presence of national WinS standards helps to guide schools through the competition, providing clear benchmarks for success.

Monitoring

Implementers generate specific data from school submissions and jury visits. Schools submit a self-reported baseline, often including their current 3-star status, which helps to measure improvements. Forms can be designed to capture reporting, impact information, and updated 3-star statuses. Jury field visits provide an opportunity to verify this data.

An assessment (e.g., an online survey), school visits, and partner interviews are conducted after one year or more. However, in schools with multiple interventions, attributing impact to a single project is challenging.

To monitor TMG globally, implementers track the region, number of participating schools, improvement of three-star status and gender-segregated enrolment numbers for each competition.

Risks

Despite thorough preparation, risks cannot be entirely excluded. Key risks and mitigation strategies include:

- **Stakeholder Support:** Strong school management or dedicated staff drive proactive participation. Schools with weaker management or limited capacities may not benefit fully from the competition, as they might struggle to participate without more direct support. Additionally, if local government officials are not involved as jury members, there is a missed opportunity for systemic change and for broadening their perspective on WinS, which could limit the overall impact and sustainability of the intervention.
- **Expectation management:** In a competition, losing can demotivate school actors. To avoid this, all participating schools receive recognition, such as a certificate or a small prize. Prizes can also be distributed more widely through special award categories, like those for “Menstrual Hygiene” or “Inclusiveness.”
- **Reputation:** To avoid reputational risks through wrong expectations of schools or partners, the conditions of participation are clear, fixed after launch and adhered to. Partnerships are selected wisely to avoid collaborations with harmful interest.

Work Packages in Detail

Work Package 1: Design

The design phase begins with the desire to implement a TMG competition, usually led by a small group. Reviewing the TMG website www.toilets-making-the-grade.org and consulting with TMG experts or previous implementers can help determine if the competition suits the local context. The kick-off questionnaire from the TMG package (see TMG website or annex) helps tailor the process to local needs.

- Key tasks include finding partners and assigning specific roles, building both a core and wider implementer team. Essential partners are:
 - the government (for consent and participation),
 - potential sponsors, and
 - idols to promote the competition.

By the end of this phase, implementers have a concept note outlining the timeline, scope, target schools, and stakeholder responsibilities.

Work Package 2: Preparation

Ideally, the core implementers team includes local or national government representatives to facilitate communication with the wider team and secure approvals for materials and event attendance. For instance, the launch event (see WP3 Dissemination) needs to be planned and invitations sent out during this phase.

By the end of the preparation phase, all materials are ready, and ideally the TMG web portal is up to date with agreed public information, including the timeline, events, prizes, participation conditions, and awarding criteria. The phase's duration may vary based on partner commitment, and not all decisions may be finalized before the competition launch to align with the school calendar.

Work Package 3: Dissemination

Effective dissemination reduces the need for direct interaction with individual schools. The launch event, whether a press conference, social media post, or large event with dignitaries, initiates public outreach, attracting media attention and informing schools and partners.

Dissemination begins in the preparation phase and continues as schools are supported, especially if the aim is to increase the number of participating schools. The TMG web portal allows easy monitoring of school progress, helping decide whether to reach out to new schools, follow up with those making little progress, or focus on next steps.

Motivation and Prizes

Motivating schools is crucial for smooth implementation. During the design and preparation phases, it is identified what will drive schools in the respective context to participate in TMG. Common motivators include:

- Recognition by the Ministry of Education or other relevant authorities, e.g., through official certificates and online mentions
- Opportunities to promote the school to parents, boosting enrolment
- Visits from idols like musicians, sports figures, or politicians
- Becoming a model school for others
- Attractive, context-relevant prizes for participation and awards, such as trophies, handwashing facilities, smart boards, sports equipment, or funds for renovations
- A patron can also help promote the competition.

Channels of Dissemination

Dissemination channels for TMG should align with local context. Effective methods for reaching schools and parents may vary. Common channels include:

- Official communications from the relevant ministry
- Outreach through local government by phone or visit
- Social media of the leading ministry
- Schools' social media communication groups and messenger services
- TV, radio, newspapers
- Direct follow-ups with registered schools showing little progress via phone, email
- The TMG web portal for registration, updates, and submissions

Media Relations

The media is engaged from the start and kept informed, especially for the award ceremony when results are announced. Media involvement can generate public and political engagement, attracting new partners.

Work Package 4: Supporting Schools

Supporting schools can be time-intensive, but there are various ways to streamline this process. The provided materials are designed to be user-friendly and may require adaptation to fit local contexts, such as customizing images or communication styles. Some may prefer pictures, videos, or in-person interactions. An "inspirational package" for schools with guidance and additional materials like posters is included in the draft TMG package.

School orientation can be offered via a helpdesk or a dedicated event, potentially included in the launch event if all participating schools are known.

If school entries must be collected on paper, this requires more staff time. The TMG website for online submissions is used to track progress and identify where schools need additional support. Frequently asked questions are addressed on the website.

By the end of the "Supporting Schools" phase, the submitted school entries meet the objectives set during the preparation phase.

Work Package 5: Jury Process

The jury process has two main goals:

- 1. assessing schools' achievements and
- 2. providing jury members with new insights into sanitation, hygiene, water supply, maintenance, waste management, hygiene behaviour, and school beautification. Even experienced WASH practitioners can gain fresh perspectives and deeper understanding of the challenges to a healthy learning environment in schools.

The jury process typically includes:

- Pre-selection of eligible entries (Pre-Jury)
- Assessment of written entries (Initial Jury)
- Field visits to selected schools (Field Jury)

Time and cost of the jury process depend on the area size, number of entries, and availability of jury members. The jury team should ideally include local government staff responsible for WinS and experts from international organizations or NGOs.

It is best to identify jury members during the preparation phase, though this often happens while schools are working on their entries.

At the end of the process, model schools and award recipients are chosen, and schools are invited to the award ceremony. The process of identifying "winning schools" is transparent, based on clear criteria, and is documented.

Work Package 6: Awarding and Media

The award ceremony is the highlight of the TMG competition, filled with excitement as schools showcase their achievements through performances like dances, poems, or songs, while others present videos. The award ceremony puts the students in the center of attention. This event is an opportunity to involve the media, allowing press to meet dignitaries and school representatives. Key political figures and celebrities can boost publicity and deepen their engagement with the cause. The ceremony is also ideal for networking with potential donors and partners.

Schools' achievements are recognized for long-term motivation, so a proper celebration with short speeches and certificates for each TMG member takes place. Awarded schools are given enough time to arrange travel by setting the event date in the preparation phase and announcing it at least three weeks in advance. The results are new contacts, insights, and happy schools.

Work Package 7: Post Competition

It is crucial to promptly fulfill all promises made during the competition according to the participation conditions. The results are documented while they are still fresh. If a web portal was used, statistics on participating schools, entries, timelines, and qualitative inputs are readily available.

Lessons and successes for internal use and future public relations are documented. A follow-up evaluation may be conducted later to measure long-term impact.

Materials

- Regularly updated materials are available free of charge on www.toilets-making-the-grade.org.
- A sample package of templates is available as annex to this document.
- A minimum set of materials to run the competition contains of:
 - Terms of Participation
 - Registration Form
 - School Entry Form
 - Jury Forms with guidance
 - Schools Guideline & explaining poster

More materials are available or can be created, e.g., a template for a GANTT-Chart for planning TMG, explanatory step-by-step videos for schools or the jury (especially if the webportal is used) or recorded information webinars.



SANITATION FOR MILLIONS



giz Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

In Partnership
with



Published by

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Registered offices Bonn and Eschborn, Germany

Sanitation for Millions (S4M)

Dr. Bärbel Schwaiger

S4M@giz.de

www.sanitationformillions.org

On behalf of

German Federal Ministry for
Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

Division 121 –
Water, Circular Economy

Postal address of BMZ offices

BMZ Bonn
Dahlmannstraße 4
53113 Bonn, Germany
T +49 228 995 35-0
F +49 228 995 35-3500

BMZ Berlin
Stresemannstraße 94
10963 Berlin, Germany
T +49 30 18535-0
F +49 30 18535-2501

poststelle@bmz.bund.de
www.bmz.de

Authors

Sanitation for Millions

Design

by creativ republic / Germany

Photos

© GIZ/CineLab Akademie

As at

October 2024

GIZ is responsible for the content of this publication.

This publication might contain links to external websites. Responsibility for the content of the listed external sites always lies with their respective publishers. When the links to these sites were first posted, GIZ checked the third-party content to establish whether it could give rise to civil or criminal liability.

However, the constant review of the links to external sites cannot reasonably be expected without concrete indication of a violation of rights. If GIZ itself becomes aware or is notified by a third party that an external site it has provided a link to gives rise to civil or criminal liability, it will remove the link to this site immediately. GIZ expressly dissociates itself from such content.



SANITATION

FOR MILLIONS