KWAHO has been working with communities to improve their sanitation status, eradicate open defecation & to provide an enabling sanitation environments for the socially secluded.
The project targeted communities around the two Safe Water Enterprise sites namely. Howamwana (Mwereni Ward) and Vitsangalaweni (Dzombo Ward) and focused on the progressive realization of the human right to Sanitation and Hygiene with a priority focus to end open defecation in Kwale County and pay special attention to the needs of women, girls and those vulnerable in the community. It operationalized the SDGs’ call to ‘leave no one behind’ and was geared towards reaching the furthest behind first.

Villagers from Lwayuni Village celebrate after their village attained an Open Defecation free status.

- 23 Villages successfully certified as ODF
- 6,000 Households reached
- 18,258 People reached
- Achieved 90% Latrine Coverage
Children Empowered to become ODF ambassadors!

William Mazera Kaema, a class 3 pupil aged 11 was motivated to build his own toilet after attending a Community triggering session facilitated by KWAHO in his neighborhood. “At first, I just took it lightly and even wondered why on earth I would need a toilet as I only lived alone. I mean one person’s faeces cannot affect the health status of a whole village. I told myself. Though in doubts, I decided to pay attention to the session. The facilitator educated us on fecal-oral contamination. I realized that all along we were eating poop from open defecation that could lead to serious diseases and can require a lot of money to treat. I got worried. I asked myself. I took it upon myself to build a latrine of my own. It took me only two weeks to dig a 7 feet pit latrine with a thatched roof! Since then I became a spokesman for the children during the triggering in my village and urged both adults and children in my village to build latrines for all households, so that I do not eat poop. I am now happy that my village is certified as ODF! We are now looking into ways which we can improve our current latrine models to prevent them from collapsing especially during rainy seasons.”

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William Mazera, an ODF ambassador aged 11

I was just a mere poor orphan who only depended on my brothers and well wishers to fend for myself. Sometimes, life became so hard I barely had anything to eat. How could I afford treatment if I ever got ill from feecal contamination?
Due to cultural and social barriers in Homwana and Vitsangalaweni communities, most adolescent girls and women were facing a range of challenges during their menstruation which prevented them from realizing their rights and contributing to society. They experienced sets of extensive limitations that inhibited them from taking part in normal daily activities such as family life, education and participation in social activities. Most school had no running water, disposal bins and emergency menstrual supplies. The school girls faced discrimination and gender stereotypes that held them back from performing well in their academics or extra curricula activities. In fact, they rarely attended school during their periods. Their education, career choices and ability to be heard was negatively impacted.

Through the SWE-Sanitation project, KWAHO intervened and provided menstrual trainings in Schools and villages and equipped them with proper information on menstrual hygiene management since most relied on the existing social norms and cultural beliefs that were passed on from one generation to the other. There were exclusive sessions that taught about the importance of breaking the silence on menstruation, how to manage menstruation safely and with dignity, de-linking menstruation from sex and the need to create the right setting to enable people to talk about menstrual hygiene more easily. Also, Different institutions were capacity built on how to address menstrual hygiene, integrate it into their programs and how to build the confidence and competence of their staff during Menstrual hygiene trainings. After the trainings, schools introduced peer to peer education to promote menstrual hygiene and even went ahead to mobilize funds to set up menstrual hygiene booths that provided running water, disposal bins and emergency menstrual supplies for the female students. Communities embraced menstrual hygiene campaigns and even men got actively involved in spreading the word, breaking the menstrual taboos and taking care of the women around them during their periods!

KWAHO in collaboration with the community were able to set up three Menstrual hygiene blocks in three different schools namely Mteza Primary school, Mwanguda Primary School and Manda Primary School to serve the girls during their periods.
“My name is Beatrice Kinyua. I am hand capped and a mother of four from Dzombo, Lunga Lunga Kwale County. With my disability, I never imagined that one day I would have a dedicated place to relieve myself [a latrine] in my household.

Before I built a toilet of my own, I always struggled asking my children to help me out into a field, hold me up, and stay with me until I was done as it was so humiliating. Like other residents in my village, Both My husband and I together with our children always defecated in the open behind the village. My children often suffered from diarrheal diseases but We had no idea it was as a result of faecal contamination till KWAHO staff came knocking on my door one day and taught us on the importance of building a toilet and having a handwashing facility.

For me, poop was an organic fertilizer or feed for animals. I never thought that flies follow us everywhere and move between our poop and food. I was disgusted by the thought that I have been eating poop all my life. Later that evening, when my husband came home, I passed the message and convinced him that we set up our own toilet. For the next 3 days, we were busy digging an 8 ft pit and was able to set up a thatched toilet by the seventh day. We later upgraded the roof to iron sheets as the thatched roof kept being blown by the wind. We also built a tippy tap to wash our hands after visiting the toilet.

I am happy that now I don’t have to ask my children to help me out to go to the field as my toilet is socially inclusive. Owning a toilet gave me dignity, independence and control over my own life!”
In a bid to accelerate promotion of access to durable, affordable and easy to clean sanitation facilities, KWAHO in partnership with Siemens Stiftung took the initiative to train the 23 villages in Homwana and Vitsangalaweni in Kwale County on innovative household investments for low cost latrine models.

KWAHO introduced Social marketing trainings to the Lunga Lunga Community to help them understand sanitation marketing as a business strategy to enable them upgrade their current latrine status and in the process improve their livelihoods as they enhance service sustainability towards achieving sanitation for all by providing a go to reliable and affordable option to curb the discouraging need to build pit latrines annually due to collapse especially on rainy seasons. To spearhead this particular project, 23 artisans from each ODF village were sponsored for a training that focused on understanding the concepts of sanitation and hygiene, the Safi-Toilets components and rationales, Sanitation marketing and sanitation financing.

The artisans were also taught about the key points of latrine construction: basic latrine parts, site selection, hole digging, lining components and superstructure options as well as different types of pits, which range in complexity and cost. All sessions were presented in English and translated as needed with illustrated materials to support Q&A, small group learning and after-class study.

At the end of 2 weeks of intense days of learning, asking questions, practicing and testing, trainees were satisfied and ready to implement the technology in their respective households. They were happy to have learned how to build latrines by doing the work, asking questions and solving problems together with guidance and coaching from KWAHO staff.

This Safi Latrine technology has been well received by the community and is currently being implemented in different household in the region. KWAHO has also been working with the community to build ablution blocks with the same model for three selected schools, Manda Primary, Mwanguda Primary and Mtezi South Primary schools. The block has social inclusive amenities such as a section for disabled persons and Menstrual Hygiene Management.

A section of the newly Constructed Safi Latrine in Mteza South Primary Sch.