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When you Preach Water and you Drink Wine: Exploring the Implementation, Use and Management of WaSH in Healthcare Facilities in Kisumu County

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When you preach water and you drink wine: exploring the implementation, use and management of WaSH in healthcare facilities in Kisumu County.

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In 2015, the assessment of water, sanitation and hygiene (WaSH) in healthcare facilities by the World Health Organization, the global adoption of the sustainable development Goals (SDG), and the publication of the Sendai framework shifted efforts towards achieving WaSH in healthcare facilities. Ensuring access to basic WaSH in healthcare facilities is critical for infection prevention and control, patient and healthcare workers safety and dignity for all. The quality and safety of healthcare facility services are critical to achieving universal health coverage and yet the WHO/UNICEF joint monitoring report in 2019 indicates that only 51% and 23% of healthcare facilities in sub Saharan Africa have basic access to water and sanitation, respectively. Guided by political ecology of health theory, this research engaged with 13 key informants, 16 healthcare workers (nurses, cleaners, public health officers and community health volunteers) as well as 31 community members (patients and caregivers) on their experiences on the implementation, use and management of WaSH in healthcare facilities in Kisumu, Kenya. This research was conducted in a slum and three rural dispensaries in the Kisumu county from May to August 2019. Findings indicate, water quality, waste management and environmental cleaning remains a significant challenge subsequently influencing health promotion and disease prevention in the community. Participants in this research associated governance challenges such as corruption, lack of enforcement of regulations, politics on prioritization and budgeting, lack of coordination and consultation among stakeholders as key challenges to improving WaSH in healthcare facilities. Also, emergencies such as floods and droughts as well as disease outbreaks compromised WaSH infrastructure in health care facilities and the resilience of the health

system. To adequately achieve SDG 3, good health and wellbeing and SDG 6, clean water and sanitation, ensuring access to proper planning and monitoring, implementation and enforcement of appropriate policies and regulations on safe and quality healthcare infrastructure are required.

Keywords: Healthcare facilities, WaSH, politics, governance, emergencies