



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Lessons Learned Series

# COMBATting COVID-19 IN AFRICA

USAID’s Water for Africa through Leadership and Institutional Support (WALIS) project focuses on building the capacity of sub-Saharan Africa’s national and regional leaders to capture and apply evidence in the development of policies, strategies, programs, and investments to improve the capacity of their water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sectors.

The African Ministers’ Council on Water (AMCOW) is a specialized African Union technical committee mandated to accelerate the achievement of WASH goals and provide policy direction across their 55 member states. AMCOW strives for an Africa with equitable and sustainable water resource use and management for socio-economic development, poverty alleviation, and regional cooperation. AMCOW’s leadership on water and sanitation issues places the organization at the forefront of WASH knowledge, and as a hub for timely, reliable WASH information and data.

AMCOW and WALIS have developed the Lessons Learned Series, which examines emerging experiences, knowledge, opportunities, and challenges of African-led WASH policy development and implementation. The Series also identifies individual country solutions that others can replicate, with a focus on COVID-19 response mechanisms.

## BACKGROUND

Toilet Pride is a Nigerian non-governmental organization (NGO) that works to improve the health of low-income families in communities across Nigeria by addressing barriers to effective WASH services. In 2020, following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Toilet Pride shifted its focus to include COVID-19 hygiene and sanitation practices in its programming, specifically in Internally Displaced Person camps, where some of the country’s most vulnerable communities reside.

PHOTO: Toilet Pride

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

**WALIS:** Sara Passman, Communications Specialist: [sara\\_passman@walis.org](mailto:sara_passman@walis.org)

**AMCOW:** Obinna Anah, Knowledge Management Officer: [oanah@amcow-online.org](mailto: oanah@amcow-online.org)

## LESSON LEARNED #4: EXPANDING WASH INFORMATION FOR INTERNALLY DISPLACED CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

### NIGERIA

It is still quite early in Durumi, an Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp in northern Nigeria, but Victoria Gumsua is already waiting patiently for her favorite part of the day. She and other children are gathered together to watch a puppet show organized by [Toilet Pride](#), a local NGO. Victoria, a 9-year old girl from Chibok, moved to the Durumi camp because of the violent insurgency in the north eastern part of the country.

Since January 2021, Toilet Pride has conducted hygiene-themed puppet shows for school-aged children at the Durumi camp. The puppet shows are part of Toilet Pride’s “Nigeria Inclusive WASH and COVID 19 Response” project. This project works to ensure that children and their families at internally displaced camps get accurate information on COVID-19 and other water, sanitation and hygiene practices so that they can protect themselves from easily spreadable diseases.



PHOTO: Toilet Pride

*Children at the Durumi IDP camp in northern Nigeria, watch a puppet show about sanitation and hygiene.*

The one-hour show, held every ten days, contains a mixture of music, puppets, hand washing demonstrations, and general discussions around importance of practicing good hygiene behavior. The shows focus on washing hands with soap, defecating in sanitary latrines, and maintaining a safe water chain. These practices can limit the spread of many diseases, including diarrhea, dysentery, cholera, and parasites. After a series of skits, the puppet character talks to the children about COVID-19 prevention.

“I love the shows. I am happy every time I see Aisha, because of her I now take

handwashing seriously. I used to be scared of the coronavirus but with the puppet shows, I understand what I need to do stop the spread of the disease in my community,” explained Victoria.

Since the Nigeria Inclusive WASH and COVID-19 Response project started in November 2020, more than 200 people in IDP camps have attended these events, and learned about good health and sanitation behaviors to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The project is just one part of Toilet Pride’s goal to strengthen sanitation services supply and demand in order to improve the health of Nigerians. The organization is working to ensure that equality, inclusion and rights remain at the center of the COVID-19 WASH response in Nigeria.