

Taking Community Led Total Sanitation to Scale with Quality

Preamble

Context and Challenge

Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) was innovated by Kamal Kar, working with WaterAid and VERC, in Bangladesh in early 2000. Since then it has been spread to some 50 countries. Initially this was in Asia - in India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Nepal and Cambodia. The first major multi-country training in Africa was in early 2007 since when it has spread there rapidly. Now in mid-2011 it is found in some form in some at least 27 African countries. Worldwide 14 Governments have adopted CLTS as national policy for rural sanitation. 13 of these are in Africa - Cameroon, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea Conakry, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mauritania, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, The Gambia and Togo, and one in Asia – Indonesia. Others are supporting and implementing CLTS but not as comprehensive national policy, and more are moving in these directions.

In consequence, CLTS is in many places being taken to scale, with a rapid increase in training and triggering. While in the early stages of introduction in a country NGOs are often in the lead (though not in India) once CLTS is established Governments take the lead in going to scale. In many countries now Governments and Government staff are the main actors. This has created a new situation with new challenges and opportunities. The major challenge is to find ways to go to scale, covering whole sub-districts and then districts, and even provinces and regions, in very short periods, and to do this while maintaining or enhancing quality and performance. Several countries in Africa aim to become ODF (Open Defecation Free) in rural areas in a few years starting from a low base, something which has never been achieved anywhere before. Madagascar has set 2018 as its target date for all rural communities to be ODF, Malawi 2016, Ethiopia, Mauritania and Zambia 2015, Kenya 2013, and the Northern Region of Ghana 2012.

Much is reported to have been achieved already. There are many challenges: with the quality of training and facilitation, with finding good trainers and enabling them to devote themselves full time to CLTS, with definitions of ODF, with methods and reliability of verifications, and with data about progress. When Governments have set targets and mounted campaigns in the past, there has been a tendency for over-reporting achievements, sometimes to an extreme degree. This has made it difficult to know the reality. Even allowing for this, it is clear that developments are now very rapid. The numbers of people reported to be living in communities that have with reasonable credibility been declared ODF (open defecation free) has been rising faster and faster. After discounting for inflated figures, a year ago one estimate gave about 10 million people in such ODF communities. In mid- 2011 it is possible that this figure may be as high as 15 million, with the proportion from Africa rising.

What has been happening, and is about to happen, is in contradiction to the earlier view that it was vital to expand coverage slowly and steadily in order to assure quality. This conventional view was reflected in two open letters¹. The fear was that as with PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal) in the 1990s, rapid adoption would lead to much bad practice and would discredit CLTS. This danger was seen to be acute because for CLTS the training of facilitators and trainers has to be hands-on in real time in communities, and classroom-only training had begun with disastrous results. Also, any target-driven rush to scale was seen as liable to lead to triggering without follow up, failure to achieve ODF conditions, and inflated reporting of numbers of ODF communities. These concerns remain. But CLTS is now irreversibly being taken to scale with unstoppable momentum. Going slow is not an option. As a matter of urgency, therefore, we came together to brainstorm ideas, and compile and collate evidence and experience, and present these without delay.

There are few precedents for what is happening in many African countries. Relevant lessons can be learnt from campaigns in some Indian States, notably Himachal Pradesh², and in the Province of East Java in Indonesia³. But neither of these has achieved completely ODF conditions. At other levels, there has been experience of what works and does not work, some of which has been gathered and published from recent workshops in Lusaka (October 2010)– in the Lusaka Declaration⁴, and in Bamako (November 2010) – in the Bamako Consensus⁵. In an effort to draw additional lessons, share relevant experience from around the world, and make these accessible as a resource for policy-makers and practitioners, a small international workshop was convened at Lukenya in Kenya from 25 – 28 July 2011, with 21 participants from 13 countries in Africa, Asia and elsewhere. We benefitted from a visit to the Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation in Nairobi and the CLTS Information Hub which was set up in the Ministry in May 2011, and from the plans and approaches for going to scale rapidly in Kenya. We also drew on written sources, presentations and discussions at AfricaSan 3 in Kigali on July 19-21, and learnings from a CLTS sharing workshop convened before AfricaSan which brought together 65 people from Governments, civil society and international agencies from 22 countries.

¹ Kar and Chambers, Open Letters <http://www.communityledtotalsanitation.org/resource/open-letters-clts>

² See Deepak Sanan 'The CLTS story in India: The sanitation story of the Millennium', in Lyla Mehta and Synne Movik eds *Shit Matters: the potential of community-led total sanitation* Practical Action Publishers, Rugby. UK 2010 :87-100

³ See e.g. Nilanjana Mukherjee with others *Learning at Scale: Total Sanitation and Sanitation Marketing Project: Indonesia Country Update June 2009*, Water and Sanitation Program of the World Bank

⁴ Source for the Lusaka Declaration <http://www.communityledtotalsanitation.org/resource/lusaka-declaration>

⁵ Source for the Bamako Consensus <http://www.communityledtotalsanitation.org/resource/bamako-consensusle-consensus-de-bamako-pour-latpc>

The notes and experiences that follow present syntheses around themes that emerged from workshop brainstorming. They focus on issues of scale and quality. The themes are:

- **Institutional Support for Scaling up CLTS**
- **CLTS Training, Triggering and Follow-up**
- **Strategies for ODF Verification at Scale**
- **Governments, Funding agencies and CLTS**
- **Pro-poor Sanitation Marketing and Sustainability beyond ODF**
- **Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Information Management Systems**
- **Emerging issues and scaling up CLTS into different contexts**

We, participants in the Lukenya workshop (see Annex A) hope that these notes will be of use to all who are engaged with the challenges and opportunities of taking CLTS to scale with speed and quality, in all countries and continents. The insights and options presented are based on evidence and experience. While not every participant might endorse every single point, there has been much cross-checking and consensus. The recommendations and ideas are addressed to policy-makers and practitioners. We present them in a positive spirit, hoping they will be useful and make a difference. We see them not as final received wisdom but as contributions to the shared struggle to which we are committed together with the champions of CLTS in Governments, international agencies, civil society and above all communities.

There is much to learn and far to go. We offer these notes as a modest contribution to the journey. We see them as living documents, and invite comments, corrections and additions. These should please be sent to CLTS@ids.ac.uk