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S . H . i . T . S .

Sharing Highlights in Total Sanitation

MALAWI ISSUE II

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OTHER NEWS:

- The National Handwashing Campaign Launch was held on Thursday, November 10th in Lilongwe District. Stay tuned for the December issue of S.H.i.T.S. which features this event.
- The ODF Malawi by 2015 Strategy will be launched in early December. The launch will kick start the implementation of the strategy and aims to bring all stakeholders in Malawi together to support its execution.
- A district-level sanitation M&E system is being developed through the ODF Task Force - the committee in charge of coordinating activities under the ODF Malawi by 2015 Strategy. The four pilot districts chosen are Mzimba South, Blantyre, Lilongwe and Salima. See P.2 for views on the system.

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From toilet building to comprehensive school sanitation

Written by: Joe De Gabriele (email: josephdegabriele@gmail.com)

During 2011, a team was contracted by the Ministry of Education and UNICEF to conduct a review of school toilets. The aim of this article is to confront you, the reader, with some of the findings and to provoke you, and hopefully entice you to change the way we look at school sanitation. In order to get the evidence the team visited several education districts and schools - including those in rural areas, market centres and urban centres. Here is what we found:

- There is little prioritisation. When a partner supports a school with facilities – there is no observable effort to discuss with the school what it needs most – e.g. urinals, HWFs, improved access for less-abled children, or support improved management. Instead the focus is usually on building another toilet.
- And this toilet is usually a pit latrine. We found pit latrines in areas with high water table, prone to floods, on the edge of cliffs..... surely there are other options?
- Some partners have taken a risk with options such as skyloos and fossa alterna – and we saw a lot of evidence of acceptance at schools and communities.
- We also found that many toilet facilities are not well managed, and in some cases not used. Partners are targeting schools with 2 criteria – need and the ability to provide bricks, sand and stones. Surely there should be another criteria – such as the existing ability of the school to manage the existing and new facilities
- There was no effort with old facilities. Some of these facilities are beyond repair and are a safety risk to children from unstable masonry to dangerous pits – and for safety reasons they need to be decommissioned – and demolished. However some old, disused toilets can easily be rehabilitated at the fraction of the price of a new one.
- This brings us to price – there are some ridiculously expensive toilets out there – almost “palaces” while children learn in dilapidated classrooms, under trees, no desks, no books etc. As pupils often remind me, “we don’t come to school to shit; we come to learn”.

- As partners, let’s improve our accountability. Almost every partner has different ways of costing its facilities. Some costed “imported” materials, others don’t cost local materials, most don’t cost transport, and almost none cost support services. We have tried to standardise costs and compared amortised costs– and these range from Mk4000 to MK16,000 per drop

hole per year for various toilet options, designs and building materials, and around MK1000 per post per year for urinals.

I have talked a lot about toilets – let’s get to sanitation. What does sanitation mean?

- Well, sanitation means that toilets are well designed in the first place to make them easy to use – light, airy, and with a well designed drop hole.

- It means that toilets are clean enough for all children to use, including senior girls and



Soap and buckets bought by school using garden sales and hand washing enforced by the children

disabled children

- It means that children can wash their hands with soap and water – no more concrete tanks, they don’t work. We found plenty of evidence that the plastic buckets bought by schools are a better bet. And we found schools that buy soap from the children out of sales from the school garden.
- And surely sanitation should also mean resource reuse. We found some very exciting examples of schools reusing urine, waste water, rain water, and even compost to have productive gardens, wood lots, orchards and landscapes. In such schools, the children don’t come to school to shit, but they certainly learn in a more practical and pleasant environment.

(Note: A report on the findings will be available soon from the Ministry of Education. The next steps are to develop practical standards for school sanitation).

What are your thoughts on these findings? Which ones were surprising? Which ones would you like to discuss further? What additional questions do you have on school sanitation? Please send your feedback to josephdegabriele@gmail.com (please include “School Sanitation” on the subject line).

Thanks, we look forward to hearing from you!

Interested in M&E for sanitation programmes? Look inside for more details! →

Government Perspectives on Sanitation M&E

A recent initiative has been undertaken by the ODF Task Force in Malawi to create a harmonized M&E system for sanitation at the district level. This system is currently being piloted in 4 districts; if deemed successful and district-appropriate, the system will be scaled up to the rest of the country next year. Principal Environmental Health Officer (EHO) Mr. Young Samanyika from the Ministry of Health (MoH) and EHO-WES (Environmental Health Officer for Water and Environmental Sanitation) Mr. Chimwemwe Jella from Mzimba South District Council share their views on this initiative and sanitation M&E in general.

Monitoring and Evaluation (M & E) for Sanitation & Hygiene Promotion Programme

By: Young Samanyika, Principal Environmental Health Officer, MoH



Monitoring is simply keeping track of what is happening or checking progress of or maintaining surveillance of programme activities. Monitoring is an ongoing process through the programme period. Evaluation is an assessment of how well and successful a programme has been implemented within a specific period. This involves comparison of actual impacts or achievement against the original objectives of the programme plan. Monitoring and Evaluation is therefore an integral part of any programme that is aimed at bringing change to the people. It shows the change through continuous collection of data on various sanitation and hygiene indicators. Data are facts about the sanitation and hygiene situation in any area and indicators are pointers or signs that will show that change has taken place.

Sanitation and hygiene programme is one of the programmes that is aiming at bringing change to the people of Malawi from being socio-economically poor due to disease burden to being productive citizens by ensuring a healthy life through promotion of sanitation and hygiene. If government is serious over this ambition then it has to keep track or continuously be checking on progress and periodically checking if the goals & objectives of the sanitation and hygiene programme are being met. This can only be achieved by making sure that there is a robust M & E system that will be informing all levels of government operation on how good and effective the sanitation & hygiene programme is being implemented.

The M & E will be applied on all levels of sanitation and hygiene promotion service provision. This includes the community, area (TA of health facility catchment), district and national levels. The system will be important on different dimensions of sanitation and hygiene services provision. The M&E system will be important to measure adequacy and quality of sanitation & hygiene services on one end, and also effectiveness of strategies & technologies and efficiency of sanitation & hygiene service provision structures including personnel. By doing this, the system will be able to tell where more services are required, whether the services are of the expected quality or not, whether the strategies being used are bearing fruits or not, and whether the service provision structures are performing as expected.

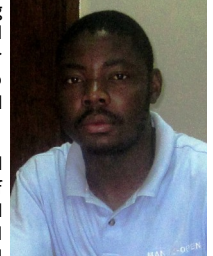
The introduction of the M & E is not coming without challenges. For the system to operate well, there is need that all structures and personnel are performing as expected. If some of people and structures will not be reporting or reporting inaccurate data then this will pose a very big challenge to the whole system. Other foreseen challenges include poor collaboration among sectors, inadequate resources including: supplies, equipment and transport and lack of supervision and feedback. It is therefore necessary that all these should be avoided and necessary support be provided.

All extension workers are therefore called upon to take part in the system. The system will be exciting in the sense that increase in sanitary facilities and hygiene practices will be tracked and performers will be easily noted. Try your best as you will be known for your good work!!!

The Importance of Monitoring and Evaluation for Overall Success of any Programme

By: Chimwemwe D.F Jella, EHO-WES, Mzimba South DHO

Managers need to make informed decisions during project implementation. They can achieve this if and only if they have accurate and reliable information. For the managers to have this information, they need to have a very strong and reliable monitoring and evaluation system.



Monitoring can be defined as the systematic and continuous assessment of the progress of a piece of work over time. It is supposed to be a basic and universal management tool for identifying strengths and weaknesses in a programme. Its purpose is to help all the people involved make appropriate and timely decisions that will improve the quality of work.

Monitoring systems have five (5) essential components:

1. The selection of indicators
2. The collection of data concerning indicators
3. Analysis of data
4. Appropriate presentation of the information
5. Use of the information to improve work

For overall success of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) activities, there is need to have a universal and harmonized monitoring system. In the current system, most districts are using indicators which they think are most applicable in their districts. Thus, indicators that District A is using cannot necessarily be the same to indicators District B is using. For instance, the data collection tool that was used by Mzimba South DHO some four (4) years ago was not so comprehensive. Some useful WASH indicators were missing. Realizing that anomaly, another tool was developed using reference data collection tools from Kasungu, Dowa, and Zomba districts. However, with the inception of new concepts such as CLTS, it is very imperative for the districts to capture these new indicators. Thus a universal data collection tool will ensure that all districts will have harmonized data for all WASH indicators. There are many advantages with having a consistent and harmonized monitoring system.

Firstly, major WASH implementing partners in all districts in Malawi can have a general consensus on the important indicators to be included in a harmonized monitoring system. The reporting district will have all important parameters included in this tool. The tool will be easy and simple to use. The structure of the tools currently in use varies from district to district. The tool that Mzimba may be using may have a different structure than another tool used by another district. Moreover, there can be a better understanding on the definition of each indicator used. For, example, if the indicator is "active VHWCs", people should have a common understanding on the parameters that constitute a VHWC to be active.

Secondly, the harmonized monitoring system will improve the reporting system. Analysis by all WASH stakeholders will be based on similar indicators. Thus, extension workers will report information basing on agreed indicators to their supervisors. Similarly, the DCT will report information basing on similar indicators to the central level and other donors. This harmonized tool will be developed in consultation with the Central Level and other partners. The quarterly reports by the DCT to central level will be based on similar indicators. This will enable the Central level to understand and better apply the indicators being used.

Another importance is that analysis of data at all levels will be simplified. Data analysis is very important for the success of any programme. Data sent to the central level is usually raw. Analysis of the data at central level becomes much more complicated because different districts report using different reporting formats. This means that the presentation of the data to the central level is different even though the districts might report on similar indicators. Using this harmonized data collection tool, the central level can analyze the information from different districts with much ease. In addition, all districts will be having similar WASH data base since they will be monitoring the same indicators.

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12 Tips for Effective Coordination when starting New Programmes in a District

Lessons from the Global Sanitation Fund (GSF) Sub-grantees working in Phalombe District

GSF Sub-grantees in Phalombe: Phalombe District Council with EWB Canada/InterAide | Concern Universal | T.M. Associates

1. Conduct regular meetings and communication with all stakeholders involved

All the GSF sub-grantees met regularly to plan and coordinate upcoming activities together. In particular, frequent meetings were set up for budget revisions, co-financing, planning for trainings, and for reflection and review. Everyone played a part in the process and had a chance to provide their input

2. Increase planning efficiency by maximizing and seizing coordination opportunities

The NGO network and district staff involved in sanitation and hygiene took the opportunity to meet immediately after a District Executive Committee (DEC) briefing, to continue planning activities and address the ideas generated during the meeting

3. When planning, ensure goals, expectations, and objectives are clear to everyone

The District Coordinating Team (DCT) members were introduced and informed on the projects coming into the district before briefing the DEC. In some instances, progress from beginning stages of project implementation was provided to district staff on a more frequent basis.

4. Involvement of every stakeholder at each level of implementation is crucial for success

Every stakeholder implementing sanitation and hygiene initiatives in Phalombe, including GSF sub-grantees, district officers, and other NGOs, met for a coordination and planning meeting to build a starting relationship with one another, identify each other's programmes, objectives, target working areas and areas for coordination or collaboration.

5. Transparency and budgeting together is important when working with the DCT

Meeting minutes or notes for every planning meeting were provided for all stakeholders. Regardless of attendance due to differences in activity schedules, each stakeholder was aware of the decisions made at each stage of planning. Every budget revision was emailed to each stakeholder, particularly to members of the district. Transparency is crucial when working with district personnel and resources.

6. Share work plans and budgets to all stakeholders at start of implementation

In Phalombe District, the GSF sub-grantees shared their budgets and work plans during the early stages of project implementation. Catchment areas were identified and modified early on, planning for co-financing of similar activities was started, and a working group committed to continued coordination was established.

7. Coordinate and liaise with other NGOs doing similar initiatives to avoid duplication and collision of approaches

Assess the activities that every NGO is going to implement, geographical target areas, approaches, personnel etc. EWB, InterAide and Concern Universal co-financed their first CLTS training for DCT members to avoid duplicating the same training for the same district officers and preventing disinterest and lack of motivation

8. Be flexible and tolerant when working with partners, while keeping in mind the overall objective of improving sanitation and hygiene

It is easy to get caught up in your own activities and specific project objectives. Keeping in mind that the overall goal is to improve sanitation in the district, support the needs of the beneficiaries, and develops sustainable solutions allows you to be flexible and tolerant when working with partners. Changing target catchment areas, rearranging activities to coordinate varying NGO/district schedules, and identifying how to best coordinate around differing approaches (subsidy led vs. zero-subsidy led) were flexibilities stakeholders in Phalombe were willing to make.

9. Informally assess existing capacities of the DCT and identify areas for strengthening. Assess the types of DCT gaps (experiential, technical) to understand where & how to gap-fill

Solutions around busy district managers were identified to introduce a form of coping mechanism; stakeholders took it upon themselves to gather the sanitation data with the consent of district health officials to collect information through health centre visits and after a quick briefing to the health extension agents on the reasons for the visit

10. Identify areas of synergy, collaboration & coordination between stakeholders early on

The technical and field experience that different NGOs have in terms of triggering skills which allowed for other NGO staff to take part as facilitators in the CLTS training. Marie Mapemba from Concern Universal, was chosen to fill the role of Facilitator for the first training despite not working in Phalombe. T.M. Associates will participate in the sanitation marketing trainings that will be conducted by EWB and InterAide as technical experts in the area.

11. Delegating responsibilities and duties to district stakeholders is crucial to build on trust, reliability and empowerment

Collective agreement was reached by the district and NGOs that the DPD would chair formal coordination and planning meetings around sanitation and hygiene programs. This builds trust in existing and new relationships, allows the district to take ownership of the process and feel empowered through their valued involvement.

12. Developing trusting and valued relationships increases motivation, accountability and incentive for stakeholders to coordinate with one another

The creation of a stakeholder's network inherently instilled the incentive to collaborate and coordinate on activities. This also developed accountability for project success of each NGO because every actor felt a part of the team



Sub-grantees & facilitators at the first CLTS training

"In most cases people turn to run away from critical issues and become very royal and diplomatic. This is not good especially during planning and evaluation. As for Phalombe the coordination has been very strong and action oriented, because there is always a room for assertive criticisms and change. This has not just been an automatic character but it's being a learned page from the stakeholders network." - Paul Sauchi, InterAide

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The monitoring tool will also empower the communities as well as the extension workers to collect the information on their own. The extension workers may be transferred from district X to Y. If these districts are currently using different tools, this extension worker may find it hard to adapt to the new data collection tool. By having a harmonized data collection tool, this particular extension worker will find it easy to work even in this new district. Thus, the skills gained by extension workers in district or area X will still be useful even if that extension worker is transferred to district or area Y.

Lastly, a harmonized monitoring tool will enable managers to make an informed decision. It should be noted that monitoring is relevant not only to progress of a project in the field, but also to managerial, administrative, and financial processes within the implementing agency. Decisions made by different managers will be based on the progress of similar indicators.

THANK YOU!!!!

Do you have any additional things you'd like to discuss with regards to M&E for sanitation? Please don't hesitate to email your thoughts to jollyannmaulit@ewb.ca



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EWB'S WORK on SANITATION & HYGIENE

In Malawi, EWB collaborates with government, donor and NGO partners to enhance the sustained adoption of sanitation and hygiene behaviours. Currently EWB's focus involves providing technical assistance to the Malawi sanitation & hygiene sub-sector for local government "Community Led Total Sanitation" programmes. Jolly Ann Maulit, and Tessa Roselli from EWB are collaborating with District Coordinating Teams from 14 Unicef-supported WASH Districts in Malawi on their CLTS programmes: Chitipa, Nkhata Bay, Likoma Island, Mzimba, Kasungu, Dowa, Salima, Mchinji, Lilongwe, Mwanza, Mangochi, Blantyre, Chiradzulu, and Karonga, as well as Phalombe District through the Global Sanitation Fund (GSF). They are facilitating learning exchange between all CLTS stakeholders in Malawi, developing monitoring & evaluation tools, coaching district CLTS leaders to help them refine their unique CLTS programmes for maximum community impact, and providing district experiences to policy discussions at the central level.

S.H.i.T.S. NEWSLETTER

This newsletter, coordinated by EWB, reviews learning and experiences of Malawi local government CLTS implementation and their collaborating NGO partners. It includes many contributions from district and central-level leaders within the sanitation & hygiene sub-sector.

Harnessing CDAs and Good Communication in Promoting CLTS: A case of Mwanza District

By: Edgar T. Phiri, District Water Officer, Mwanza



Edgar Phiri (left) with the DEHO Mr. Alfred Phiri (right) at a CLTS Review Meeting when roles of CDAs and HSAs were discussed

There have been disagreements on the roles of various stakeholders in the promotion of CLTS in Mwanza district. The root cause of the issue lied on the concerns that were raised by HSAs on why Community Development Assistants (CDAs, extension staff for the department of Community Development) do not always accompany HSAs when they go for supervision in their villages and yet they are all players in WASH promotion.

Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) is one of the most effective approaches to sanitation and hygiene promotion that embraces an important aspect of the multi-sectoral approach, where various sectors bring together knowledge and effort to achieve some desired outputs. In this regard, it is so imperative to make full use of various stakeholders and all

other necessary opportunities in existence such as good communication between CLTS teams and the community, and excellent coordination amongst CLTS team members.

There was once an issue raised during a CLTS stakeholders' review meeting in Mwanza where the HSAs complained of minimal assistance that was being offered on the part of CDAs during routine CLTS supervision in various triggered villages. It is an undisputable fact that CDAs cover considerably wide areas compared to HSAs. For instance, each CDA in Mwanza covers an area of not less than 5 GVHs as opposed to HSAs who rarely have more than 2 villages to cover. To clear out the mist over the issue this is what Mwanza District Council agreed:

The issues of WASH are a primary responsibility of the HSAs and hence they ought not to be accompanied by a CDA every time they go for supervision for the latter have large areas to cover compared to the former, who are even residing in their working areas. Instead, those HSAs that reside in the same areas with the CDAs should be communicating when they are going for supervision.

It is the role of the CDAs to communicate with respective HSAs when carrying out their day to day business so that they combine CLTS and other business. It was believed that this strategy would help to promote joint monitoring and active involvement of all players in the sector.

On the issue of communication, it was reported that some communities in Mwanza are arrogant to the issues of sanitation and hygiene such that they lack the zeal and will to attend such meetings. This prompted those HSAs booking for a triggering sessions to alter the message deliberately to depict any other activities in the area which attracts the most attention so as to have better turn up. This was found to have been a challenge because community members were getting irritated upon realizing that the purpose of the meeting was completely different thereby affecting the triggering proceedings. The district anonymously decided that communications should include the exact purpose of the meeting and not twisting it in any way.

This so far is has worked in Mwanza in the promotion of sanitation and hygiene through CLTS approach. We hope it can everywhere else in Malawi.

WORLD TOILET DAY
NOVEMBER 19TH

Saturday the 19th of November 2011 is World Toilet Day—What will you do to celebrate???

Please send pictures or brief stories on how you celebrate this event to jollyannmaulit@ewb.ca for publication in the December issue of S.H.i.T.S.!

For more information, please visit: <http://www.worldtoilet.org/WTD/>