

# Triggering: an extract from the *Handbook on Community-Led Total Sanitation*

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The *Handbook on Community-Led Total Sanitation* contains comprehensive information on CLTS, its pre-triggering, triggering and post-triggering stages, as well as examples and case studies from around the world. Here, we have reproduced the chapter on triggering communities. The extract describes a selection of CLTS triggering tools that some of the authors in this special issue have referred to in their articles.

- Facilitating community appraisal and analysis
- Background and basics for igniting CLTS
- Defecation area transect
- Mapping of defecation areas
- Identifying the dirtiest neighbourhoods
- Calculations of shit and medical expenses
- How to trigger disgust: pathways of faecal contamination
- Ignition moment
- Dealing with different responses to triggering
- Testing for contamination
- Facilitating the community's plan of action

- Community mapping for monitoring

In his acknowledgements at the beginning of the handbook, author Kamal Kar writes:

*Users of this handbook must feel free to use its guidelines the way they find best. The methods described are not the only ways of implementing CLTS. Users are encouraged to use their own best judgments at all times and innovate locally appropriate approaches and tools to achieve and enhance community participation and empowerment leading to total sanitation and beyond.*

## Triggering

Hundreds of CLTS triggerings have been done in new villages in many countries without much difficulty. It can be good to initiate CLTS triggering in villages where there have been no earlier attempts for sanitation improvement. Experienced CLTS facilitators can do a good job of triggering in virgin villages.



Photo: Samuel Musyoki, Plan Kenya

Philip Otieno of Plan Kenya contaminating drinking water with shit before offering it to community members to drink during a hands-on CLTS training in Tanzania.

### Facilitating community appraisal and analysis: background and basics for igniting CLTS

Triggering is based on stimulating a collective sense of disgust and shame among community members as they confront the crude facts about mass open defecation (OD) and its negative impacts on the entire community. The basic assumption is that no human being can stay unmoved once they have learnt that they are ingesting other people's shit. The goal of the facilitator is purely to help community members see for themselves that open defecation has disgusting consequences and creates an unpleasant environment. It is then up to community members to decide how to deal with the problem and to take action.

### Background and basics for igniting CLTS

Certain sections of the community will have reasons to want to change the status quo. For example:

- Families who do own toilets discover that they are just as prone to faecal-oral contamination due to the actions of those who don't.
- Landless people are often criticised and abused for defecating on other people's land.
- Women and young girls suffer the most from the lack of privacy in open defecation, often having to do it only before dawn or after dark.
- Religious leaders realise the meaninglessness of wearing clean clothes as they are dirtied by flies that have been on human excreta.

The strong feelings of these different sections of the community are powerful drives to action to change a village to become open defecation free (ODF). They can be encouraged to form their own pressure groups to encourage others to change.

Though the sequence of methods is not important, starting with a transect walk often works well.

**Tip**

The key is the attitude and approach of the facilitator. It is also the skilfulness of the facilitator to clearly explain that this exercise is not an outsider's attempt to stop open defecation but for the insiders to analyse and take their own decisions. The decision to continue with open defecation and ingesting each other's shit by the insiders is also fine with the facilitators, but the name of the village would be added to the report about their new learning, if the insiders agree.

Feel free to innovate and try out new methods apart from those described below.



Woman facilitator from Social Fund for Development (SFD) Sana'a, triggering CLTS with village women in Ibb Governorate in Yemen.



Participation of women facilitators in each CLTS triggering team is essential in Yemen, Pakistan and other Muslim countries. If a conducive environment is ensured and triggering meetings are arranged indoors or in places where no men could see them, women participate spontaneously, express their views and initiate collective actions against open defecation (OD).

**KEY DOs****DO TAKE**

- Flip chart
- Coloured cards
- Scissors
- Masking tape
- Marker pens
- H<sub>2</sub>S bottles for testing water purity (faecal contamination and presence of salmonella and coliforms)<sup>4</sup>
- Camera
- Coloured powders with adequate amount of yellow powder (for marking defecation areas) if not locally available
- If some of these items are not available locally available materials like ash, sawdust, rice husk, chaff straw, leaves or grass can be used

**DO HAVE WOMEN IN THE TEAM**

The team must include women facilitators. Where women are confined and cannot participate with men (as in Yemen and NWFP in Pakistan) two women facilitators are a bare minimum.

**DO HAVE ROLES FOR THE TEAM**

These may include:

- Lead facilitator.
- Co-facilitator. There could be two co-facilitators where the lead facilitator does not speak the local language.
- Content and process recorders.
- One or more environment setters responsible for ensuring a conducive environment, including a suitable mapping place, assuring no chaos, no mobile phones, controlling gatekeepers, assuring that there is no lecturing, arranging women's, men's and children's groups, having energisers if needed...
- All the team are to watch for emergent natural leaders and encourage them to speak up and take a lead.

**Approach**

**DO FACILITATE ANALYSIS** that ignites a sense of disgust and shame. The most important elements that ignite CLTS are disgust, embarrassment, a sense of uncleanness, the impurity that is bad in many religions, and (especially for women) inconvenience due to lack of privacy. These often impel people to end OD and practice hygienic fixed-point defecation.

**DO ASK QUESTIONS.** There are many ways of helping to trigger disgust among community members without teaching or telling them anything. Be creative in the questions you ask (see e.g. Box 1).

**DO INVOLVE CHILDREN** in the discussion and ask them do they like to defecate in the open? Do they think of that as a good or bad practice? If not good, what they will do to stop open defecation? Often children start processions shouting loud slogans against OD. Encourage these activities. They find it great fun.

**DO NOT LECTURE** or try to educate the community about the diseases caused by open defecation, flies as agents of contamination, or the need for handwashing at this stage.

**DO NOT ever** talk of any subsidy. Tell people clearly that you are not there to provide any subsidy or to suggest latrine models.

**Getting started**

The usual advice for village work applies. Do not dress ostentatiously. Be friendly. Be relaxed. Don't rush. Be open and build rapport with those you meet. Be observant. Listen. Appreciate good things of the community – praising good things first makes it more acceptable to raise issues later that disgust and make people ashamed, and to ask the direct questions of CLTS triggering.

When you arrive at the village introduce yourself. Explain the purpose of your visit. If questioned, you may find it useful to tell the community that you and your team are studying the sanitation profile of villages in the district. You are trying to find out the number of villages where people are practising open defecation and know the effects of this practice.

There are many different ways of initiating a discussion on open defecation and village sanitation. You can often start discussion with a few community members during an informal walk through the village. You can start with just a few people who you meet on the way and ask them to walk with you behind the houses, in the bushes, near the river or other open places where people generally defecate. A small gathering in such odd places will soon attract others.

You can start to ask questions like: 'Is this the place where most people of your village shit? Where else? Whose shit is this?' Ask them to raise their hands if they have defecated in the open today and then suggest they go back to the spot where they defecated this morning and see if the shit is still there. Many will say that it is not there any more. If you ask them what could have happened, some will say that dogs and pigs have eaten them. Ask whose dogs? Ask when the dogs come back home, how do

<sup>4</sup> See Kar (2010).



**The suitable places for open defecation are identified by the local communities during a defecation area transect. Members of local community of a village in Ibb Governorate in Yemen leading an OD transect team to show potential places frequented by people in the morning and evening.**

they smell and do they lick members of the family or play with the children? Once their interest is aroused you can encourage them to call other members of the community together. You will also need to find a place where a large number of people can stand or sit and work.

Make sure that most people gather at the CLTS triggering site and most hamlets of the village are well represented. The following could be done:

- Ringing a bell (was found effective in Kenema district of Sierra Leone).
- Announcement through the microphone of gurdwara and temples (was found effective in Punjab and Haryana states in India).
- Inviting people through the public address system/microphone of the mosque is common in

many countries.

- Send children to different directions of the village to announce the start.
- Transect walk before mapping is sometimes useful to attract people. As you walk along the village roads, lanes and bylanes, invite everyone you meet on the way. Talk to people who join you during the walk. Others will be interested to join as they see a stranger talking and walking with their friends and relatives.

**DO** convene and facilitate.

**DO** ask people what the local words for 'shit' and 'shitting' are, and then always use those terms.

**DO NOT** use nice, polite words but use people's own crude terms throughout.

**DO NOT** hesitate to use the raw terminology.

Once you have met and gained the interest of at least a good part of the community, the next stage is to convene a meeting. Ideally those who come will be women, men and children, and people from all groups within the community. The aim is to facilitate their comprehensive appraisal and analysis of habits and effects of defecation and sanitation practises in their community, using PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal) tools and methods.

To get started, ask for a show of hands for questions like: 'Who has defecated in the open today?' and 'Have you seen or smelt human shit in your village today?'



**Within a short time the community took the team to a place far down the hill which was literally filthy and full of garbage, shit and plastics. This was also the main water collection point for the village. The place was right below the village mosque which had no toilet or wash place. People visited the mosque a number of times each day and many defecated and washed themselves before going to pray. Discussion on the spot acted as a very powerful trigger.**

**Box 1: Sample questions for raising disgust**

Questions that could be asked of a community during a defecation area transect walk:

- Who comes to shit here?
- Where do the women go?
- Which are the places used by the children? (However, a children's group should be facilitated separately and they take their facilitators and others to places which they use for open defecation).
- Whose shit is this?
- Indicate two or three different heaps of shit, ask if they see any difference in shapes, colour, form-viscosity, etc. What do they think the reasons could be for such differences (e.g. diarrhoea, dysentery, cholera, indigestion etc.)?
- Pointing to a fresh shit, ask if they could see any living things on it (e.g. flies, maggots, insects, mosquitoes, dung beetles, etc.)?
- If you find some covering their noses or spitting in disgust, ask why they were doing that? Do they do the same whenever they visit the sites everyday?
- Ask how far the flies can go, and if they visit their homes carrying shit?
- Tease them by suggesting they should probably not worry much because the flies they see on shit are different from those that sit on their food (they might not agree with your suggestion and they will say that those are the same flies that carry shit to home).
- Ask if more flies sit on liquid shit or solid shit, dry or wet shit?
- Ask which shit dries up earlier, normal faeces or faeces from someone with diarrhoea? Which are more watery?
- Ask which ones attract more flies (dry or watery/semi-solid shit)?
- Ask if the contamination from a liquid diarrhoea shit spreads faster or whether normal semi-solid shit spreads faster?
- Finally, ask if they enjoy living in such environment?

Ask any other questions you think might raise disgust amongst them. Innovate locally.

See also Chimhwa (this issue)

**Defecation area transect**

Transect walks are the single most important motivating tool. The embarrassment experienced during this 'walk of disgust' can result in an immediate desire to stop open defecation and get rid of these areas. Even though everyone sees the dirt and shit every day, they only seem to awaken to the problem when forced by outsiders to look at and analyse the situation in detail. A transect walk involves walking with community members through the village from one side to the other, observing, asking questions and listening. During a transect walk for CLTS you could locate the areas of open defecation and visit the different types of latrines along the way.

- Try to understand with the community what constitutes an 'unhygienic' latrine.
- Visit latrines which are not covered or where the faeces are draining out in the open.



**Children know all the locations of OD very well. Village children in Ibb Governorate, Yemen on a defecation area transect walk.**

- Flash a torch through the hole of open pit latrines and ask some people to look inside and say what they see.

**Tips**

On the transect walk:

- Ask questions such as which families use which areas for defecation, where women go, and what happens during emergency defecation at night or during high incidences of diarrhoea. Sometimes people point out whose shit it is.
- Do not avoid the defecation areas, but rather spend as much time there as possible in them, asking questions, while people inhale the smell of their shit and feel uncomfortable at having brought an outsider there. This will help to trigger the sense of disgust and shame that will make them want to do something to change. If no shit is visible, this may be because of so much diarrhoea which simply soaks in or which rain washes away.
- Draw attention to the flies on the shit, and the chickens pecking and eating the shit. Ask how often there are flies on their, or their children's, food, and whether they like to eat this kind of local chicken.
- Look out for solid and liquid shit, and ask why not all the shit has shape and form. Often the liquid is closer to the dwellings where children and adults are more likely to be infected.

**A triggering in Himachal Pradesh**

In one triggering, in a village in Himachal Pradesh, people wanted to conceal their practices and said there was no OD. When asked to raise their hands if they practised OD, no hands were raised. They were then asked to close their eyes and think about their children. They were also asked to reflect if anyone thought OD harmed their children. They were asked again whether they thought there was OD in their village. If so they were told to raise their hands. Thirty out of 50 did so.

**Source: Shashi Bhushan Pandey, Knowledge Links**

- Ask if flies were being produced inside the pit and if it was safe to leave the pit open.

The key is standing in the open defecation (OD) area, inhaling the unpleasant smell and taking in the unpleasant sight of shit lying all over the place. If people try to move you on, insist on staying there despite their embarrassment. Experiencing the disgusting sight and smell in this new collective way, accompanied by a visitor to the community, is a key trigger for mobilisation.

**Drivers and their helpers can help triggering**

In a village in Himachal Pradesh, the community claimed that they were open defecation free (ODF), although OD was a common practice. The driver's young helper was briefed by a facilitator to say that he urgently needed to relieve himself. He then asked a villager for an open place where he could defecate. One villager quietly indicated a spot and asked the helper to go there. He urged the driver not to disclose it to anyone. The helper went, saw the place full of shit, and tipped off the facilitator. The facilitator led the transect walk to the area. Only a young woman agreed to accompany him while others declined. She was newly wed and had come to the village a week before. She was horrified at what she saw – heaps of accumulated shit in a vertical-sided gully – and vomited with disgust. Water flowing close to the shit was being pumped up to a tank for gravity distribution. She said she would ask all girls marrying into the village to insist on a toilet, and challenged the community over trying to hide this from outsiders.

**Source: JP Shukla, Knowledge Links**



**Walking through the bush to find the stuff! Rural community near Awassa, Ethiopia leading an OD transect team.**

### A triggering in Mardan, NWFP Pakistan

In a village in Mardan, NWFP Pakistan, a defecation area transect group discovered plenty of semi-solid and liquid shit scattered very close to the dwelling houses. One of the members of the community who was walking the transect concluded that the incidence of diarrhoea was very high and that as a result the children and men could not go far to defecate and had squatted near the houses as an emergency. This clearly indicated that more than half the population was suffering from clinical and sub-clinical levels of diarrhoeal disease.

### Mapping of defecation areas transect walk

Facilitate the community to make a simple map on the ground showing households, resources, defecation areas, water points and problems, to stimulate discussion. Ask them to choose a suitable large open area for this. The mapping gets all community members involved in a practical and visual analysis of the community sanitation situation.

In the mapping exercise, all households should be invited to locate their dwellings on the map, for example by marking the ground, or locating with a leaf or stone, and to show whether they have a latrine or not. The areas of open defecation (OD) can be shown with a coloured powder, and lines drawn to connect them to the households that visit them.

The map can be used to highlight many things. Draw attention to how far some people have to walk to defecate and at what times of day. Are there any safety issues? Ask people to trace the flow of shit from places of open defecation to ponds and other water bodies, resulting in their contamination.

### Facilitating mapping to be focused, fast and fun

Sometimes an ideal mapping exercise takes a long time. When people get involved in mapping their village, they tend to go into



Rural Community in Hetauda, Nepal used coloured cards to indicate locations of better off, medium and poor households. The cards on the left-hand side indicating poor households are clustered around the fringes and outer margins of the village. Better-off families visit these areas every morning to defecate in the open. For the first time the poor/lower caste realised why their neighbourhood was dirty and filthy. They also realised why people of higher caste visit areas where many households raise pigs in free range. The poor warned the better-off to stop OD in their neighbourhood from the next morning or else face consequences...



Women in villages in Ethiopia and Tanzania engaged in defecation area mapping including the places of emergency defecation. The amount of medical expenses for treatment of diarrhoea, dysentery etc. is also written on the cards against each household.



As the CLTS facilitators asked about areas of emergency defecation and defecation at work, the size of the village map extended far beyond the boundary which was made initially. This revealed new realities of defecation in Samba (an agricultural farm).



An exclusive mapping exercise with children is in progress in Shebadino village near Awassa in SSNP region in Ethiopia. This triggered CLTS that was primarily led by children and very powerful child natural leaders emerged from the exercise.



Mapping in progress in a village in Ibb Governorate, Yemen. In a well facilitated CLTS triggering process, many people work on the map together and indicate their households, areas of open defecation and calculate the amount of shit produced by the respective households.

finer details for each household, like the number of men, women and children in the family, each lane and bylane and so on. Often detailed information related to demography, socio-political aspects, infrastructure and institutions may not be necessary for triggering CLTS. One should be careful about time management. Time spent at the early stage eliciting unnecessary information might create a serious time crisis at the most crucial stage of ignition.

In order to trigger CLTS in a fairly reasonable time (within 3–4 hours) I have tried out a much quicker methodology for participatory mapping of defecation areas. This could be accomplished in half an hour to an hour's time depending upon the number of households in the village.

### Quicker methodology

- Ask villagers to come and stand around a large open space (preferably the space should be clean and dry with no rubble, stones or grass).
- A few volunteers are invited to draw a quick outline boundary of the village using sticks, branches, coloured powder etc. In some Bolivian villages up on the Andes, women quickly used woollen thread from a knitting ball (which they generally carry on them) to demarcate the boundary of the village on the grass (see picture opposite).
- Ask someone to indicate only a couple of important landmarks inside the boundary (such as schools, main road crossings, places of worship etc.).
- Now ask someone to step inside the map and indicate the place where they are all standing (today's gathering).
- Identify a young boy or girl and ask him or her to step in and indicate his or her house.
- Ask the gathering if s/he did it correctly. If correct, ask everyone to give him/her a thunderous clap. All these help everyone to get orientated with the map.

Next, very clearly explain the following to everyone:

- Only one member from each family

should pick up a card (heaps of card should be kept outside the map) and walk inside the map and stand exactly on the spot where his/her house is located.

- Allow some time for the people to settle down on the map properly.
- Now ask them to write down the name of the head of the family on that card and place it on the location of the house (near his/her feet where he/she was standing).
- Tell them that these cards represent their houses. Now ask them to draw a line from their respective houses to the place where they go to defecate. Tell them to use chalks to draw lines on the ground connecting their houses to OD places. At this point there will be lots of laughter and fun. Allow it to happen. Remember you should not hand out cards or chalks one by one to the community. Keep these materials in a corner of the map and ask them to go and collect them. Encourage a lot of movement and fun creativity.
- Indicate to the plastic/paper bag containing the yellow powder and tell them to pick up and use it to show the respective places of open defecation, indicating their shit. Tell them to spread more yellow powder where there is more shit and less vice versa. There will be much more laughter at this stage. Remember not to bring the bag of yellow powder from person to person. Let them do it all. You will notice a big rush to pick up a handful of the yellow powder. At this point children will pour yellow powder in places previously unknown to many parents.
- Allow time for this to be completed.
- Now ask everyone to come back and stand on their house positions again. Ask them where do they go for emergency defecation? Meaning during rains, in the middle of the night, at times of severe diarrhoea or when sick and so on. Ask them to pick up yellow powder and put some on these spots of emergency defecation. You will find another round of laughter as people add additional heaps of yellow powder around their homestead. People



Women in an Andean village in Bolivia mapping their defecation areas: 'Who shits where?'

might say that during an emergency they go behind the house of their neighbour and similarly his neighbour comes to shit behind his kitchen garden. Everyone will notice that the map is gradually turning yellow. You can ask them whether the entire village seems to be full of shit.

- You can also do the calculation of shit by households on the same map and identify the family that contributes the maximum amount of shit to the village environment everyday. Ask everyone to give a big clap to congratulate him/her.
- Ask them to step outside the map without disturbing the cards. Thus a household map is created.

**Option:** Put coloured cards on the ground. The colours can represent well-being or wealth categories, usually rich, middle and poor and sometimes very poor. Ask people to pick up their colour, add their household name, and put on the map. This often shows the poorer living on edge of the community near the defecation areas, and indicates that the better-off defecate near houses of the poor.

**Do not** commit the mistake of domi-

#### Tips

- A map made on the ground can be transferred onto paper, illustrating households who have latrines and those who do not, and can then be used for monitoring (see below).
- You don't need many resources to make a map.
- Encourage participants to use leaves, seeds, sticks or other easily available materials to represent different things. Be sparse, not sparing in your instructions. Encourage creativity and make it fun.
- Colour coding if used should be very quick. Do not allow it to drag on.
- If you have yellow powder that represents OD areas, smear some on your hand, and ask people to shake hands with you. Then ask them what is transferred to their hands.
- 'Interview the map'. This means asking questions and probing the meaning and implications of what has been shown. The map is a means to better community understanding of the sanitation situation, not an end in itself.

nating in a subtle manner e.g. distributing cards or markers one by one to the members of the community instead of keeping them somewhere in the middle and asking them to pick the cards or markers up.



Women in a Bolivian village using woollen thread to draw a village map on the ground and show areas of OD.



Yellow powder on the map shows defecation areas. As the CLTS triggering process moves on and the community indicates areas of emergency defecation, yellow patches on the map spread and increase. Anxious members of a community look on in a village in Bolivia. Be alert for capturing spontaneous comments of disgust and individuals wanting to stop all these.

### Identifying the dirtiest neighbourhoods

During the mapping exercise, ask the community to stand in small groups according to their respective neighbourhoods. Ask them to discuss among themselves which is the dirtiest neighbourhood of their village, the second dirtiest and so on, and to note these on a piece of paper. Collect and read out the papers. In most cases you will find that all groups identify the same one or two neighbourhoods as the dirtiest.

Then ask the groups to note down where they go to defecate. Through this exercise people of the dirtiest neighbourhood realise, maybe for the first time, that others are defecating in their areas and are also labelling them as the dirtiest neighbourhood. This discovery usually triggers immediate action to stop strangers from coming into their areas to defecate. After this realisation, the poorer and lower status people in many villages prove to be the most active and fastest initiators of CLTS.



**Calculation of household shit production is in progress, in a village in Yemen. Analysing the defecation area map along with the calculation of shit per household and faecal-oral transmission routes together with the community is extremely crucial.**

They also benefit most from saving money spent on treatment of diarrhoea and other diseases.

### Calculations of shit and medical expenses

Calculating the amount of faeces produced can help to illustrate the magnitude of the sanitation problem. How much human excreta is being generated by each individual or household per day? Households can use their own methods and local measures for calculating how much they are adding to the problem.

The sum of the households then can be added up to produce a figure for the whole community. A daily figure can be multiplied to know how much shit is produced per week, per month or per year. The quantities can add up to a matter of tonnes which may surprise the community.

- Ask which household produces most, and ask everyone to clap and congratulate the family for contributing the most shit to the village.

- Similarly identify the second, third and so on and appreciate their contributions.

- Identify the family that produces the least. Ask them why they produce so little shit? Ask them to eat more and shit more. All this generates a lot of fun but silently the fact emerges clearly.

- Ask people how much they spend on health treatment.

- Stand around the map. Environment setters make the crowd quiet.

- Point out the cards and ask them how much they spend for treatment and medicine for diarrhoea, dysentery, cholera and other OD-related diseases they identified.

- Ask whether they wish to calculate by month or each year, and then to write the amount on their household card only using markers.

- As with calculation of faeces, ask which family spends most.

- Point it out if they live close to the defecation area or in the dirtiest neighbourhood. Are they poor or rich? Who suffers most – rich, medium or poor?



In a well facilitated CLTS triggering, villagers in Tanzania are calculating household shit. The ignition point is often reached while communities are doing this.



A community in a village in Mardan, NWFP, Pakistan raised their hands in total agreement to stop OD.

- Put up a flip chart and ask them to calculate how much the whole community spends in a month, a year, and then over ten years. Put this chart next to the calculation of amounts of shit by month, year and ten years.

- Tell them they are really well off to be able to spend so much. Ask if any poor families had to borrow money for emergency treatment of diarrhoea for any family member? If so, what was the amount? From whom and where? Was it easy to borrow money and repay it? Who lends money for emergency treatment and at what rate of interest? NGOs, middle men?

- **Never suggest that they stop open defecation or construct toilets. You are not supposed to suggest or prescribe.**

### How to trigger disgust: pathways of faecal contamination

#### From open shit to open mouth

Ask where all that shit goes. As people answer that it is washed away in the rain, or enters the soil, draw a picture of a lump of shit and put it on the ground. Put cards and markers near it. Ask people to pick up the cards and draw or write the different agents or pathways which bring shit into the home.

For example:

- Flies
- Rainwater
- Wind



The 'shit, bread and flies' demonstration, Tororo, Uganda.

- Hoofs of domestic animals
- Chickens that eat shit and have it on their feet and wings
- Dogs that eat shit or have it on their paws or bodies
- Shit-smearred ropes (for example, used for tethering animals)
- Bicycle tyres
- Shoes
- Children's toys, e.g. footballs
- Wind-blown waste plastic
- Contaminated water

Then ask how the shit then gets into the mouth. For example:

- Hands, fingernails
- Flies on food
- Fruit and vegetables that have fallen on or been in contact with shit and not been washed
- Utensils washed in contaminated water
- Dogs licking people

You should never suggest the pathway of contamination. Let people discuss, identify, draw/write.

Photo: Philip Otieno, Plan Kenya

### The glass of water!

- Then ask for a glass of drinking water. When the glass of water is brought, offer it to someone and ask if they could drink it. If they say yes, then ask others until everyone agrees that they could drink the water.
- Next, pull a hair from your head and ask what is in your hand. Ask if they can see it. Then touch it on some shit on the ground so that all can see. Now dip the hair in the glass of water and ask if they can see anything in the glass of water.
- Next, offer the glass of water to anyone standing near to you and ask them to drink it. Immediately they will refuse. Pass the glass on to others and ask if they could drink. No one will want to drink that water. Ask why they refuse it. They will answer that it contains shit.
- Now ask how many legs a fly has. They might tell you the correct answer. If not, inform them it has six legs and they are all serrated. Ask if flies could pick up more or less shit than your hair could. The answer should be 'more'.
- Now ask them what happens when flies sit on their or their children's food and plate: what are they bringing with them from places where open defecation is practiced?
- Finally ask them what they are eating with their food.

When someone says that they are eating one another's shit, bring them to the front to tell everyone.

- The bottom line is: everyone in the village is ingesting each others' shit. Once one of the communities has said this publicly, you can repeat it from time to time. Do not say it before they do. It has to be what they have said as a result of their analysis, not what you have come to tell them.
- Ask them to try to calculate the amount of shit ingested every day. Ask how they feel about ingesting each others' shit because of open defecation? Don't suggest anything at this point. Just leave the thought with them for now, and remind them of it when you summarise at the end of the community analysis.



**The ignition moment!** Miguel Pimentel, an experienced facilitator of Plan Bolivia, offering a glass of shit-contaminated water to a woman who is seen covering her mouth and nose in disgust. The horrific realisation of the fact that everyone has been eating each other's shit is the bottom line. These are very critical moments which hasten the triggering process.

### Ignition moment

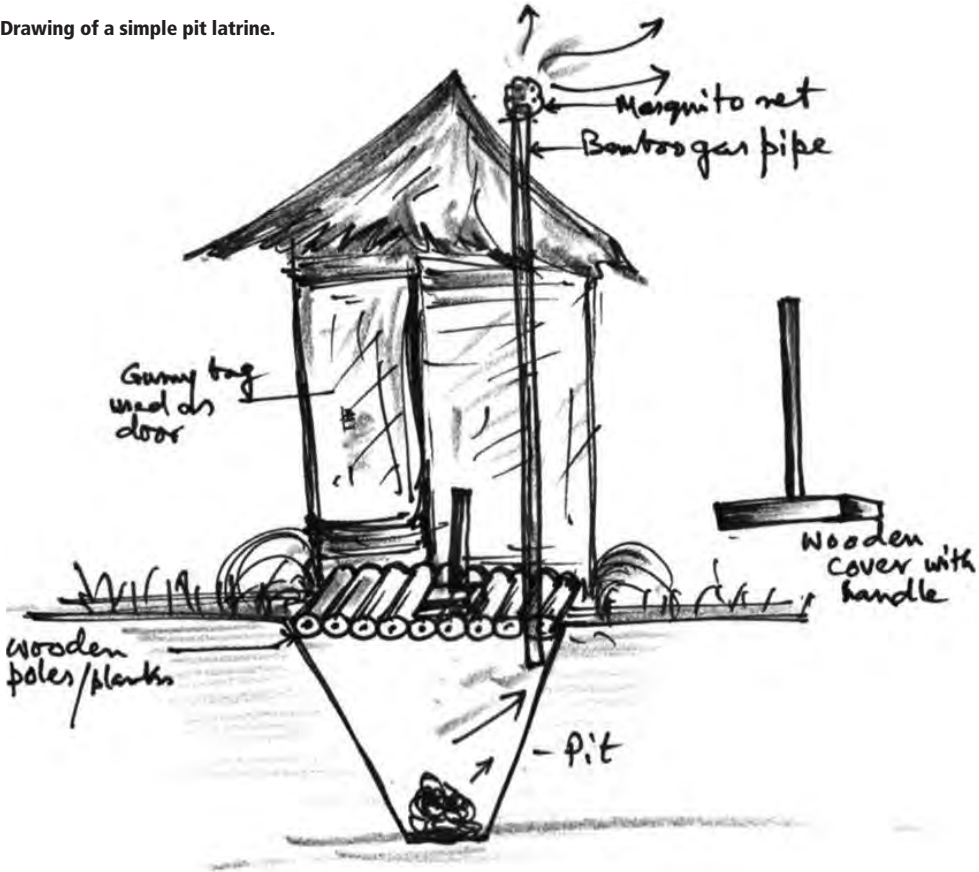
Be very alert for the ignition moment. It is the moment of collective realisation that due to open defecation all are ingesting each others' faeces and that this will continue as long as open defecation goes on. When this happens there is no need to continue with other activities.

Often at this stage the spirit goes high and violent arguments begin as to how to stop open defecation. Don't interrupt or advise. Quietly listen to the discussion.

If questions are thrown to you, tell them that, as an outsider, you have little local knowledge and that they know much better than you what is best to do in their local situation.

- Tell them that they are free to choose anything including the continuation of open defecation.
- Tell them you have understood how the local community is practising open defecation and are ingesting each other's shit knowing well the terrible implication of the faecal-oral transmission routes.
- Tell them not to misunderstand you as a promoter of latrines or suggesting they stop open defecation. Tell them to feel free to continue their old practice of OD if they wish.

Drawing of a simple pit latrine.



• At that point some might say they do not want to continue. Ask why? The usual reply is that latrines are too costly to build. Ask what a normal latrine should cost, and what would be the minimum cost. Common answers are US\$100–US\$250 or more. Tell them about low cost latrines constructed elsewhere, and that one can be constructed for only US\$3–US\$4. Most will not believe this. Ask them if really interested to raise their hands.

• If they do so, explain with detail on chart paper on a wall. Quickly draw a simple pit latrine. (Do not take a drawing with you, but draw it on the spot). Ask how much that would cost and how difficult it would be to construct a similar direct pit latrine? Let them know that this was not your design, but one developed by poor people in one of the poorest countries of the world. You could also share experiences of other

communities who have taken up total sanitation and have achieved success.

• Ask them the cost. They may say even less than you have said, and that they will go ahead and do it. Ask them to raise hands, and then record their names on a sheet.

**DO NOT** prescribe models of latrines. Remember that the central idea of CLTS is not to prescribe the best and most durable model of latrine to the community at first, but to initiate local action for communities to look for their own alternatives to open defecation.

**DO NOT** worry if no one talks about starting any local action then and there. In that case thank them again and tell them that you will record them as a village where people are willing to continue open defecation and eating one another's shit (see 'Damp matchbox' below). Do not feel that you have somehow failed. You have probably started a process.

### Some tips and ideas

- **Lift a child.** Look for and lift up a small child playing on the ground or eating something with flies on it. Ask whose child it is. Is it the child's fault that it is ingesting dirt and shit? Whose fault is it then that the child has to live in a filthy environment? Is it right that the children in this village should grow up like this? Parents who do not want your children to live like this, please raise your hands.
- **Cover up fly-infested shit.** If there is shit with flies on it, cover it with soil. The flies should then go away.
- **Mirror.** After realising that they are eating one another's shit, and sharing their feelings with others, the faces of women and men change radically to show disgust and unhappiness. When this happens present a mirror to some of the better dressed women to look at their faces. Many will refuse.
- **Shit, food and flies.** During a defecation area transect in Solan District of Himachal Pradesh in India in May 2006, a daring woman participant, Smt. Nina Gupta, picked up raw human shit on a thin stone slab and brought it to the meeting place around the map. The people accompanying her on the transect walk were stunned to see this and followed her to the map. She then asked someone to bring a plate of rice which she placed near the shit. Within no time many flies gathered on the shit and the rice and moved between them. People watched with struck silence and two women started vomiting. A stray dog came, attracted by the smell of the shit. No further explanation or comment was required. People said that because of OD they were eating one another's shit. Since then this has become a common practice in triggering.
- **Be humorous in a fun and teasing way, for example:**
  - Apologise several times during the process. Stand with folded hands. Beg not to be misunderstood as a sales agent of toilets or someone from the government or an NGO trying to persuade them... 'We are not here to tell you to stop open defecation or to construct latrines. You must feel free to continue OD as you have for generations.'
  - If people then ask why you are there, say, 'We are here to learn'. After a few exercises, say 'We have learnt a lot...' and summarise the learning – volume of shit, medical expenses etc. After each participatory analysis it is important to document the main findings (e.g. amount of shit deposited in the open in a day, month, year, total amount of money going out of the village per year etc.) on a large chart paper in front of the gathering. Best if these are written by a member of the community and read out to all. Ask, 'Whose analysis and findings were these?'
  - After shit, food and flies, when the flies are hovering between the shit and food, say 'Don't worry. There are two sorts of flies. The kind of fly that sits on human shit does not come on food or water.' People might refuse to accept that.
  - When people have realised what they are doing, say 'Never mind. By all means continue to eat one another's shit.'
  - Tell a humorous story. A Hindi example is about a pig that does good deeds on earth, goes to heaven, is fed very good food, but asks to be able to go back to its normal and preferred diet of shit. The poor pig is bitterly disappointed. Shit is not available in heaven.
  - Invent and share your own ideas, experiences, jokes and stories.

### Dealing with different responses

The above is a common pattern. But community responses differ widely. There are actions you can take to fit different responses. These can be divided into four categories according to intensity, as seen in Figure 1.

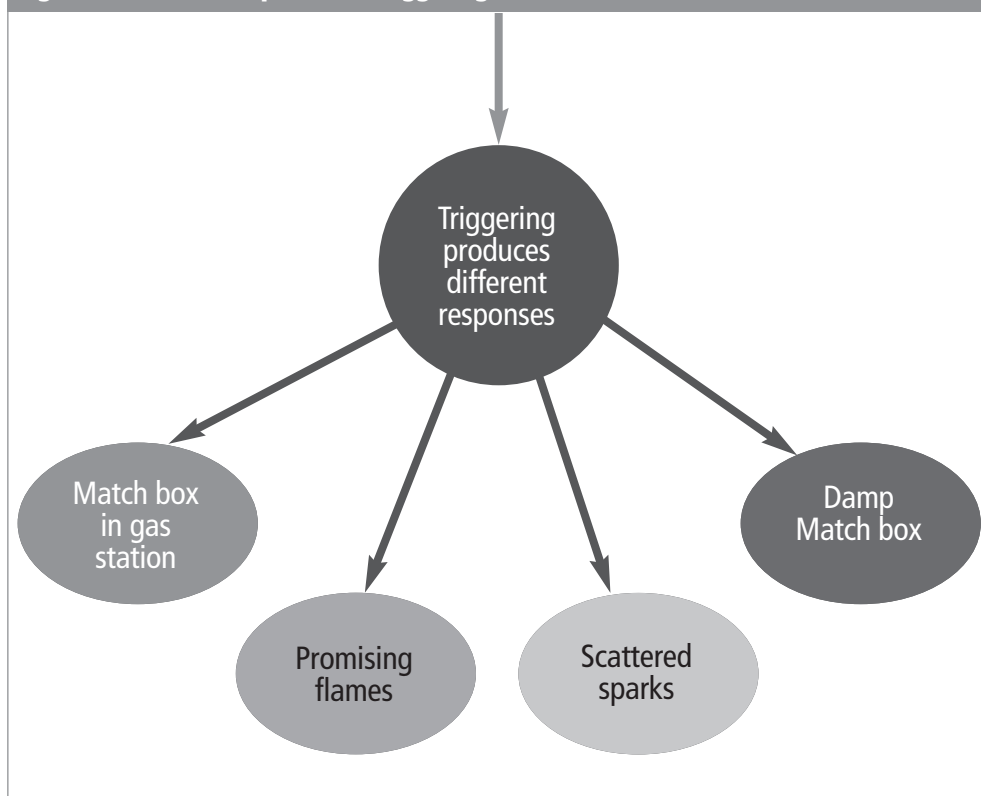
### Suggested responses

Your appropriate response also differs. Here are some suggestions.

### Actions on the same day after the triggering process

Note that some actions are taken in two or

Figure 1: Different responses to triggering



more situations, and some are elaborated in the section on post-triggering.<sup>2</sup> Remember that when natural leaders (NLs) are in action as ‘community consultants’ and triggering CLTS in villages other than their own, actions might vary greatly from what we generally do. In many cases the NLs come and stay in OD villages for a week or so until the village is declared ODF or has made a considerable progress towards ODF status. There are examples where consultant NLs, both men and women, have visited new villages, and, after seeing huge accumulations of shit there, they have declared that they wouldn’t eat until they construct one simple pit latrine for his/her own use and demonstrate it to all villagers. In such cases a lot can happen spontaneously because the NLs stay in villages sharing accommodation with the insiders.

#### Matchbox in a gas station

Where the entire community is fully ignited and all are prepared to start local action immediately to stop open defecation.

- Share and explain about low and moderate cost toilet options including the sources of their availability (as above).
- Facilitate an action plan with dates for completion and formation of a community committee.
- Facilitate the drawing up of a list of people willing to construct toilets mentioning the date and week when they will complete.
- Decide a mutually agreed date for a follow-up visit.
- Facilitate the start of community monitoring using the social map drawn by the community (a ground map needs to be

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter 4, ‘Post-triggering guidelines,’ *Handbook on Community-Led Total Sanitation*.

redrawn on a big chart and displayed where all can see).

- Find someone from the community to be the link person with suppliers of pans and sanitary hardware. In very remote locations, ask community's suggestions on developing market links and how they could access low-cost and improved hardware?
- Leave behind vials for testing water contamination (see below).
- Aim for local self-reliance with local linkages and leadership so that you can soon withdraw. Do not let your presence induce dependence or inhibit local innovation and action.

#### Promising flames

Where a majority has agreed but a good number are still not decided.

- Thank them all for the detailed analysis of the sanitary profile of the village and seek their permission to leave.
- If someone from the community agrees to initiate local action, bring the person up front and encourage him or her to share their thoughts with the rest of the community as to how he or she is going to initiate the construction of latrines.
- Ask everyone if they are interested to know how other communities have built low cost latrines.
- If all agree by raising hands, draw and explain a simple direct pit latrine using locally available low cost materials (as above).
- Facilitate action planning, with a weekly list of commitments for toilet construction and dates for completion.
- Decide mutually agreed dates for a follow-up visit.
- Facilitate the start of community monitoring using the social map drawn by the community.
- Find someone from the community to be the link person with suppliers of pans and sanitary hardware. In very remote locations, ask community's suggestions on developing market links and how they

could access low-cost and improved hardware?

- Leave behind vials for testing water contamination.
- Aim for local self-reliance with local linkages and leadership so that you can soon withdraw. Do not let your presence induce dependence or inhibit local innovation and action.

#### Scattered sparks

Where the majority of the people are not decided on collective action, and there are many fence-sitters, and only a few have started thinking about going ahead.

- Thank them for the detailed analysis and tell them not to misunderstand you as a promoter or salesperson of latrines or toilets. Tell them to continue their age-old practice.
- Ask how many of them by raising hands are going to defecate in the open tomorrow morning.
- Tell them that you are leaving the village knowing that there are people there who decisively want to continue to eat each others' shit.
- Seek their permission to take a photograph of the group with all with hands raised to say that they will continue open defecation. At this moment people usually vehemently object to the photograph. If anyone disagrees, allow time for confusion and discussion. Generally, within a short time, those willing to stop open defecation can be asked to raise their hands. This then influences the rest to raise their hands as well. Then ask again if you can take a photograph of all those willing to stop, with their hands raised.
- At this stage identify any who have decided to initiate local action and stop open defecation. Bring them in front of the gathering and ask all to applaud them.
- Fix an early date to return when others who may not be present can be there, for a further round of ignition.
- Leave behind vials for testing water contamination (see below).



### Damp matchbox

Where the entire community is not at all interested in doing anything to stop open defecation.

- Thank them all and leave. Do not pressurise.
- Tell them that you are surprised to know that they are knowingly ingesting one another's shit and are willing to continue to do so.
- Judge whether to ask if you can take a photograph of the community.
- Leave with them vials to test for water contamination (see below).
- Just before leaving ask if they would be interested to visit a nearby community or village where OD has been made history by the community themselves.
- Lastly, and with prior apologies, you can tell them a culturally appropriate, shocking but funny story if you know one.



**School girls in a Tanzanian village in action during a CLTS triggering session. Young adolescent girls are those affected the worst by the effects of open defecation. If facilitated properly they often take urgent action in stopping OD. Senior school girls in Bangladesh said that they were not late to school any more because they had latrines. Before CLTS they had to wait around the bush for an opportune moment when no men were around. They couldn't wake up before sunrise as their mothers did.**

### Testing for contamination

Whatever the response, leave the community with some of the small glass vials of hydrogen sulphide (H<sub>2</sub>S) that are available in markets. In some places in India it is known as Aquacheck, available for 50 cents (US\$ equivalent). There could be different commercial names for such H<sub>2</sub>S vials available in different countries. Regarding availability of such vials, enquiries may be made at Water Testing laboratories or with chemists or drugstores. At the end of the triggering, ask the community to fill vials with water from their drinking water sources, following the instructions on the bottle, including prompt closure and wrapping with adhesive tape sticker noting the time of collection and source. Tell them to keep the bottle away from sunlight and at room temperature – 25-35 degrees Celsius for 24-48 hours, or, in colder places, in a clothing pocket. If not fit for drinking the water will turn black, indicating faecal contamination. The community can keep the bottles themselves. After use, the bottles should be broken and buried.

### Facilitating the community's plan of action (on the day of triggering)

The process of planning should concentrate on immediate positive action plans. Activities might include:

- Put up a flip chart and encourage early action-takers to come and sign up.
- As they come, give them a big clap, and say that they are leaders for a clean future.
- Find out their well-being status, and praise them especially if they are poor.
- Keep them standing in front of the crowd.
- Do the same with any who come forward as donors.
- Take a photograph of the group as those who are going to transform the community's environment.

Facilitate the formation of a sanitation committee. Write up the names of the committee. Ask how long before they will stop OD totally. If the answer is more than

2-3 months, ask if 60-90 days of ingesting each others shit is acceptable. The response may be to share toilets and dig pits to cover shit almost at once.

Identify 2-4 potential natural leaders from this process.

Inform them if there is to be a follow-up sharing workshop, and what to prepare for it – transferring the ground map onto paper, listing the community members who want to start immediately, a sketch of their own low cost design using local materials, progress since triggering. Invite women, children and men NLs to the sharing workshop. Before leaving ask the NLs to rehearse slogans against OD to be chanted by children. Initiate action by children at once, accompanying the outsiders as they leave.

Tell people about other actions by nearby communities and what they are doing. If the community is the first in an area, stress the recognition they will receive, and the chance of a special celebration if they become ODF.

Caution: Don't make any commitment of benefits.

### Community mapping for monitoring

When triggering leads to 'matchbox in a gas station' or 'promising flames', leave behind large sheets of paper, tape and coloured markers for transferring the ground map, writing the names of the newly formed committee members, the community plan for achieving ODF status and names of those decided to start digging pits immediately or next day/week. Encourage redrawing by community members of the map from the ground onto the sheets of paper taped together to be large enough to be seen by a small crowd. The map should be in a public place and protected from the elements or spoilage. It can be marked with the sanitation status of every household and kept up to date to show progress.

### SOURCE

Kar, K. with R. Chambers (2008) *Handbook on Community-Led Total Sanitation*. Plan: UK and Institute of Development Studies (IDS): Brighton, UK. Online: <http://tinyurl.com/CLTShandbook>. Full URL: [www.communityledtotalsanitation.org/resource/handbook-community-led-total-sanitation](http://www.communityledtotalsanitation.org/resource/handbook-community-led-total-sanitation)

### NOTES

Available to download free online:

<http://tinyurl.com/CLTShandbook>

[www.communityledtotalsanitation.org](http://www.communityledtotalsanitation.org)

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Available in English, French, Spanish, Khmer, Portuguese, Hindi and Bengali. An Arabic translation is also being prepared.

All photos by Kamal Kar, except where specified.