

CHILDREN IN FOLLOW UP

Prepared by Philip Otieno and Amrit Mehta

Triggering itself is not sufficient

Follow up is very necessary in order to consolidate the gains made by triggering.



Triggering is a very important exercise as it offers the communities an opportunity to reflect on their sanitation situation. However, without follow up, the momentum generated for change cannot be sustained. In this presentation we shall look at experiences from different countries on the role that children have played and can play in supporting CLTS follow ups in their communities, and also within their own schools.

The following are examples from different countries on the role children have played in SLTS and CLTS follow up.

EXPERIENCES FROM DIFFERENT COUNTRIES

INDIA

CLTS in India is applied in the context of Government of India's Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC). TSC also lays focus on rural school sanitation and hygiene education as a part of the program design itself.

After CLTS had been introduced in states of Maharashtra, Himachal, Haryana etc. in 2006, triggering in the villages started. In a number of triggering exercises a large number of children participated. Sometimes only the children were triggered and it was found to be very effective in terms of their interest, enthusiasm and leadership qualities.

It was learnt that rapport building through games served as a good entry point to get children's full involvement in the triggering process. Triggering was started with children in villages and then followed by triggering with children in school. It was learnt that starting with the question of how many of them went for open defecation that morning got them straight into thinking about their sanitation practice. Children were then led into an analysis of the sanitation profile of their school, and then of their village communities in small groups. Transect walk of the school and mapping of defecation areas in and around the school and villages were the exercises undertaken. But calculation of shit, 'hair dipped in shit and then in water', and fecal oral transmission route invariably turned out to be the exercises leading to ignition. It was often at this point that they realized that they were eating each other's shit.

This at times led to dramatic results. For example, a boy of the 6th standard in Purbani Village of Kalpa block of Kinnour district in Himachal Pradesh in August 2007 after witnessing a triggering exercise in his school, started collecting boulder by nearby dilapidated store house along with his younger brother and identified a place for his household toilet and dug a small pit. By the time their parents returned home in the evening from work site and asked who did it, he explained the triggering in his school that how *kha* (shit) comes back to us after we leave it in the open. This became the talk of the village and apparently inspired others in the village. As a result, many villagers started making make shift toilets (dry simple-pit) immediately and the village became open defecation free with in ten days. The village got Nirmal Gram Puruskar(clean village award) from the President of India in 2008. In April 2008, following a triggering in a school in Summerkot Gram Panchyat (GP), Rahul, a boy of 6th standard, shared that ‘although we have the squatting plate at home but we have not dug a pit and are still defecating in the open. But now I will compel my grandmother to dig a pit. I will also help her in making pit’. Summerkot GP is now ODF and nominated for NGP this year.

There were generally two types of responses following a triggering exercise with children in schools: one, children resolved to stop defecating in the open and committed on their own to ask their parents to do the same and construct a latrine immediately; children decided to maintain their school toilets and keep them in good condition.

Teachers were requested at the very outset not to be present during triggering so that the children feel free and participate in the exercises fully. But the teachers and the principal were invited quietly close to the ignition moment or soon after when the children are making decisions regarding future sanitation practice in their schools and villages. This affects teachers deeply and encourages them to support children in their activities.

Some more stories of children’s involvement

Rampur Bharapur school, Sirmour district, Himachal Pradesh

Rampur Bharapur School lies in the Gram Panchayat (GP) of Ponta Sahib Block in Sirmour district of Himachal Pradesh. It is a higher secondary school with more than 300 children. The school has a good campus with many class rooms. As part of sanitation facility in the school, 4 urinals with 2 latrines each for girls and boys existed with no hand washing facilities. Triggering in the school was done in May, 2010. The facilitation team of participants of a CLTS training program, with due permission of the Principal, started the process of triggering with children. After introduction and climate setting by playing a game with the children, mapping of villages and school premises was facilitated. To begin with, it was great fun for children, but transact walk to the school toilet filled with shit and flies, turned out to be quite a shock (though they already knew it) for them, when they realized the crude fact of eating shit, following the water and shit exercise. This triggered children like anything. The ignition was so strong that a girl Kusum said “we will change the situation soon and we will not eat shit anymore”. This was followed by many other responses. Some of them are as follows:

Kavita “We will tell principal to get the choked toilets cleaned once. After that we would maintain them properly and ensure cleanliness.”

Amit: “I will go home and tell my parents to build a latrine and also tell other villagers to do the same.”

In the end, children invited all the teachers and principal of the school and made presentations about their learning and requested the principal to get the choked toilets cleaned up soon. The principal and the teachers were quiet; a sense of shame and disgust was visible on their faces when the attention was drawn to the fact that the toilets for teachers were neat and clean and toilets for boys and girls were in a horrible condition. Despite the request of the facilitator, the principal and the teachers did not go to see the condition of toilets. They offered tea to the facilitators, which the facilitators politely declined promising ‘ we will have it in our next visit when your campus is clean..’

In the end, the principal made a commitment with children to clean all the toilets within a week. A discussion on the formation of children sanitation club and its role and responsibilities followed. Village wise children groups were formed to motivate their village people to stop OD.

Outcome of the exercise:

- The school principal took the promised action and ensured that all the choked toilets were cleaned up within a week.
- A person was engaged for cleaning toilets. In order to pay him, the school has devised a mechanism that includes each student paying 1 rupee per month with some money being made available from school fund.
- School has formed a school sanitation club in which student volunteers from different classes are members. One teacher from the school was made responsible for coordinating children activities. School sanitation club members are responsible for maintaining the overall cleanliness of the school, distributing the responsibilities of cleanliness of the school campus among different class students, preparing topics on sanitation for morning assembly etc

Bhimpuri Middle school District Nainital, Uttarakhand

CLTS triggering was done in Bhimpuri middle school in 2009. During the process children actively participated. In the end of the process, a girl Rajani studying in 7th standard emerged as a natural leader

She said: “*I have understood that we all are eating each other’s shit because in my village people are shitting in the open. I will form a team of children that will request people not to defecate in the open. We will ask them to dig a hole and cover their shit with mud, to begin with till the proper latrine is constructed.*”

Post triggering activities

- Rajani acted as a leader of the group and along with village *pradhan* (village chief), *up-pradhan* (deputy chief) started activities, such as: following people going for open defecation and requesting them to cover their shit with mud; asking people to construct toilets; may be simple pit toilets, as soon as possible; motivating those who have already constructed to use the toilets properly; asking women to dispose child faeces into the toilet etc.
- Every morning and evening, Rajani carrying a stick in her hand along with a group of children used to take a round of the village and check the toilets to see whether they are being properly used or not.
- After triggering, village *pradhan* along with children and teachers of the school organized a children's procession shouting slogan against OD, almost twice in a week till the village achieved ODF status.
- In the school, the teachers also formed a school sanitation team of senior student volunteers. Rajani became the leader of this school sanitation team. The team is responsible for the maintenance of the overall cleanliness of the school.

Outcome

- The constant effort of children and village chief helped the village in achieving ODF status within two months.
- Now, the toilet facility is available at three locations: in the school, in the anganwadi (preparatory) school and in the panchayat office.
- Village has achieved fully sanitized status and has been nominated for Nirmal Gram Puraskar (the clean village reward of the Government of India) for the year 2010.

2. Dhanachuli village & school

A girl named Savitri studying in 12th standard along with her elder sister Nirmala and her friend Meena initiated the process of change in her own village. They triggered children in primary school.

The school has a big campus with two locked, defunct toilets with lots of old shit around and with a kitchen just next to the toilets where Mid Day meal was prepared and served to the children. Locks were opened and all the children along with the teachers and some villagers were brought to the toilet where flies were hovering on the shit. Discussion that followed helped everyone understand that they were eating shit and it would continue unless they will stop OD. Teachers got scared and were ashamed. Moreover, they started blaming villagers for defecating in the school campus and also using toilets when school is closed. One lady teacher also blamed the village chief for not doing anything about

cleaning the choked toilets. Villagers also started blaming teachers for not maintaining the toilets properly. Now Savitri, a student of the 12th standard, took the lead and engaged the present villagers in a dialogue about whose responsibility was it to take care of the sanitation facilities in the school where their children were studying.

Post triggering activities

- Savitri included some small girls in her team and started motivating people by going house to house to build makeshift toilets to stop OD immediately. Savitri shared *“It was very difficult to convince people in the village as many of them used to say that your parents have given you so much of freedom. You small girls will teach us what is right and what is wrong?”*
- Gradually, women started supporting these girls and a village sanitation committee was formed. To begin with, some villagers, particularly women, started building simple pit latrines just to come out of the ugly situation of OD
- Facilitator during follow up visit facilitated the sanitation committee formation. Now 3 women of the village and one elderly man Gosai also joined the team and a woman Heera Devi was chosen as the leader by all the members.
- The next challenge in front of sanitation committee was how to stop migrant laborers defecating in the open who live in Dhanachuli village market. Team members requested them not to defecate in the open and asked them to construct a simple pit latrine. This was not acceptable for laborers. In spite of their constant persuasion, laborers continued defecating in the open. Then girls along with Heera Devi started following them early morning and requested them again to stop defecating in the open as this has been decided by all the villagers. If they can't then they have to leave the village.
- Thereafter, the committee members organized a children rally shouting slogans against OD. The students and some teachers from higher secondary school of Dhanachuli also participated. Later, many students of her village and from other nearby villages of the gram panchayat joined the campaign. Now in almost all the villages of Dhanachuli gram panchayat, some action started happening against OD.
- To sort out the problem of laborers they constructed 3 simple pit toilets at the open defecation area and asked the laborers to use these simple pit toilets. The laborers were not ready to accept it and one night they filled all the pits with mud and defecated in the open. In the morning, when committee members saw it, they got disheartened but did not lose hope.
- The strong determination of all the members inspired young boys of the village to join the struggle of girls against OD. Now this new team dug another three pits and requested these people to use them. *“Young girls asked these laborers not to make them eat their shit anymore and to kindly make use of the pits dug by them.”*

Outcome:

- Village achieved ODF status within a period of one month. Initially many of them started with simple pit latrines.
- Villagers cleaned all the drinking water sources (naulla) and formulated some rules and regulations such as: cleaning the water source at regular intervals of time; not to wash clothes near the source; collecting Rs10 per family per month for operation and maintenance of the water sources.
- All the toilets in the school have been cleaned up and teachers along with children have taken the responsibility of maintenance.
- Community has also owned the responsibility of maintenance of school campus and toilets
- Now community is moving up along the sanitation ladder and improving their toilets and also working for making all the villages of GP fully sanitized

Firozpur village_District Kheda ,Gujarat:

Firozpur is a village of Kapadvanj Block of Kheda district in Gujarat state of India. In October 2009, a team of CLTS facilitators visited village and they learned that this village had been provided with some toilet construction material like, Pan, P- Trap and super structure material for some more than 20 BPL households. In the village they found that out of 20, only 3 persons had installed the superstructure without digging pit and fixing pan and p-trap. Discussion with some people revealed that because 'sarkar' (Government) has given them free material so they accepted it.

At the time of triggering, it was observed that in the village most of the people were in their fields. Only a group of around 15-20 children were present. The children were asked by the facilitators to take them to the OD area. In the group were two adolescent boys Uday and Ajay. At the OD area they were asked some questions about the shit such as: who defecates there, whose shit is this etc. and applied just one trigger tool-i.e. water and shit tool. The moment children saw this demonstration their facial expression changed. Children who were laughing and hooting earlier became quiet. Then Uday said "*we don't want to eat shit but there is no option because we are poor and can not afford a toilet.*" A further discussion on the diseases caused due to OD and the expenditure incurred on the treatment of these diseases was calculated by the children. The amount was more than Rs. 5 lacs per year. This was an eye opener for them especially for Uday. A further discussion started on how to stop OD in the village and how this group of children can work for this cause. Uday became the leader of the team and decided to motivate people to stop OD. Children shouting slogan to end OD took a round of the village by the time some people also gathered in the village and asked children to stop this. They all shared that they are now convinced that they are eating shit brought to their food through flies and their parents are spending a lot of money on medical treatment. People were surprised about the facts revealed by the children. Gopal a villager said "*We never thought about it .we should do something to stop this.*" In this village triggering with adults was not done, only children along with two adolescent boys Uday and Ajay were triggered. Uday was elected as the leader of the Group.

Activities of the group:

- Although Uday initially found it an impossible task to motivate people of his village, he did not stop his efforts and started organizing children rally in the village shouting slogan against OD.
- He organized meetings with villagers in different pockets of the village and shared with them how due to OD they were eating each other shit, getting sick and spending hard earned money on medical treatment.
- Uday further made some groups of children in different parts of the village and asked them to request their parents to build latrines. He asked them to monitor the status of their area like who has started the construction and who are still going for OD etc.

Outcome

From the district administration Uday and his team got full support. This included constant encouragement, linkage with bank to get money for toilet construction for the poor; and under the NREGA program some people also got money for digging their pit etc. This village took 5 months to achieve ODF status. Now village has become fully sanitized and has been nominated for nirmal gram puraskar.

Gujarat

Triggering took place in the village and school Garej of Porbander in Gujrat (27 December 2009). A sixth standard girl named *Vaishali* emerged as a powerful natural leader among others. She announced during triggering itself that she understood the whole thing and now she would not let anyone defecate in the open. She not only motivated the Gram Panchayat Pradhan to demand and construct one more toilet in school with help of district rural development agency, but also mobilized other villagers by saying that stop eating shit by leaving it in the open. Coming from a small school-going girl child, this had a profound impact on the villagers. The village is now open defecation free and nominated for NGP this year(2009-10).

Cambodia:

1. Kempong Cham province

On 7th July 2010 triggering of CLTS with children was done in two villages of kampong Cham province in Cambodia. During the triggering in the first village, namely, Por Thum, children were quietly separated from adults and taken to a different location in the village. Initially, facilitators played a game with children. Once the climate was set, open defecation area mapping, calculation of shit, oral faecal transmission routes were carried out by the children. Then all the children were taken to the OD area and a detailed

analysis of OD practice was done. Children were hesitant to go to the OD area but facilitation team somehow managed to bring all the children to the place full of shit and foul smell. All the children covered their nose and wanted to leave the place as soon as possible. Realization of eating shit after the demonstration of water and shit tool shocked all the children; they did not utter a word for some time. A young boy Dayan then said “*Yes, we are eating shit if we are dumping it in the open but if we dig a hole and cover shit with mud the problem would be solved*”. Young girls said they will tell their parents to build latrine for them.

Groups of children were formed according to the area they came from to organize rally shouting slogans. Village chief said that once in a week children procession will be organized. In the end children procession with shouting slogan was organized.

Kenya

In another example at Got Kabok primary school, in Homabay district in Kenya, the pupils were taken through all the steps of triggering. At the end of the session they felt sufficiently triggered to contribute meaningfully to the CLTS process. On their own volition and initiative they decided that their contribution would be to dig latrine pits. They formed a team that went round the village digging pits. They did this during their free time in the evenings after classes or over the weekends. They mainly targeted the homesteads headed by elderly persons, the sick and other vulnerable in the community. Tonny Oluoch, one of the pupils at the school said that, “We wanted to support the



process in a special way, and we thought the best thing to do was to dig the pits especially for the widows and other elderly people in the village who had no one to help them... We chose to dig the pits because they are more difficult to do than constructing the walls.” After digging the pits for the disadvantaged in the community, they then went round and assisted each other dig pits in their respective homes. The contribution of these school boys made the work of latrine construction much easier for the community of GOT Kabok. This

is one of the communities that has become ODF in Homabay. The role played by these school boys was quite invaluable in this achievement. This then is an indication of the potential that is there in promoting School Led Total Sanitation (SLTS). The energy and enthusiasm of the youth can meaningfully contribute to the success of the process

INDONESIA

This is the experience in East Indonesia. The Children Group were formed in 2007 by Teachers, Parents, Village Officials and Children themselves. With the main tasks to monitor 5 pillars of *STBM* (Indonesian Policy of Total Sanitation) or after the CLTS triggering.

The children group were trained in child friendly tailor made module for *STBM*. The member are 4th-6th grade of Elementary Schools children around 4-10 children.

The monitoring activity is normally conducted every Friday or in *extracurricular* module. What to monitor: progress of toilets (pillar 1), type of toilets (pillar 1), handwashing media (pillar 2), HH water treatment (pillar 3), HH waste water treatment (pillar 4), and HH solid waste treatment (pillar 5).

During the monitoring there is “interaction” between House Hold and Children, normally the adult feel ashamed if being warned by Children (but not all!). This could speed up the ODF process.

After the monitoring, the data stored in the village office’s board. With the signature of Teachers or Care takers.

BANGLADESH

In Bangladesh it is noted that, the child-to-child approach provided a convenient framework for children's active participation as an ambassador and agents of change, not megaphones to transmit adult messages in the promotion of hygiene education and school sanitation. Children proved their potentiality and creativity by developing hygiene message by themselves and organizing cultural program which was one of the most effective activities to mobilize the elder. In addition, the demonstration of hand washing is an effective way to change the mind set up of children and community. The presence of student at schools increased. The ICDDR,B evaluation of Plan’s CLTS program found that school-based promotional activities were very popular in communities and had resulted in households constructing latrines from health concerns. 125,241 students (63,287 girls and 61,954 boys) and 3,023 teachers of 507 primary schools have been implementing hygiene promotion activities in schools and catchments area.

Children group played an important role for stopping open defecation as well as promotion of hygiene practices across project areas. At present the rate of child mortality, morbidity and malnutrition reduces remarkably. Involvement of children in sanitation movement has developed their confidence, leadership and enhances their presentation as well as facilitation capacity. Children’s potentiality in social mobilization is demonstrated and acknowledged by all.

The children groups led procession and rally in their respective para and they chanted slogan like, “we never defecate in open spaces for the welfare of children”, “Wet stool or dry stool, we shall not have any stool”, “No defecation in bushes”. Children group composed many folk songs on sanitation and they presented their songs in different village and union level sanitation program to aware community people. Besides, they staged many dramas also to shake the people to stop open defecation for the welfare of their children.

Under School Sanitation and Household Hygiene Education through child to child approach children are playing the key role to change the hygiene behaviour. Children

have taken initiative to conduct baseline survey, prepared action plan and awareness sessions at school and communities in groups. The activities included such as campaigns, school fairs and open days, posters and picture – making, drama and puppets, songs and poems, demonstrations, radio programme, teachers others skills, games etc.

MALAWI

In Malawi after SLTS trigger is successfully done, children come up with action plans as part of the post trigger phase. During the post triggering phase the team made follow up visit to the schools to find out how far they have gone in implementing their agreed action and necessary support is provided. School develop their own action in improving their sanitary facilities such as latrines, hand washing facilities. School children were able to mobilize themselves using locally available materials such as plastic bottles to make hand washing materials. The schools which already had permanent latrines but without washing facilities were able to organize themselves and constructed hand washing facilities after triggering. Besides all these developments there is not much difference between SLTS and CLTS in triggering collective action.

Schools /pupils and teachers reactions

Teachers: They are now supervising the children in maintenance of hygiene and sanitation of the school premises, advising and ensuring that children use sanitary facilities; Tell pupils to regularly fill the hand washing facilities with water and encourage children to practice the same in their homes.

Pupils Sanitation Clubs: The pupils are giving hygiene and sanitation talks during morning assemblies at the school; performing drama with hygiene themes; promote awareness on hygiene and sanitation practices in the surrounding communities.

School Management Committee and Parent Teacher Association: They are urging traditional leaders to mobilize their subjects to participate in implementation of school sanitation and hygiene project activities: Provide community awareness on the importance of hygiene and sanitation both at school and home and monitoring progress of sanitation activities.

In another example in Malawi, Soon after the triggering process, children in Salima triggered villages started digging pits of different sizes and shapes for the construction of latrines as an initiative to end open defecation. The initiative assisted the supervisors from different departments to discuss with men and women in those villages to join children in constructing latrines which they have already started. The initiative by children in Salima district in leading CLTS implementation has sent a good message that children can really be change agents in most of the innovations that we want the community to undergo.

5 of the 8 villages that were declared ODF after being triggered were those that had very active children in championing CLTS in their households. In these villages, latrine

coverage was 95% to 100%, drop hole covers coverage ranged from 80% to 97% and hand washing facility close to latrines ranged from 80% to 85%, they also improved sanitation in their respective primary schools as now they started demanding availability and use of latrines at school through use of Sarah initiative in sanitation and hygiene promotion. The initiative gives children chance to be discussing sanitation and hygiene issues at their schools and make some demands from authorities at the same time children start responding to the problems in sanitation and hygiene. In Salima, Sarah initiative is a complementary effort to school health programme in improving sanitation and hygiene in schools. This was an improvement worth noting as far as children's contribution towards CLTs is concerned.

It was also worth noting that 8 ODF villages had no cholera case in 2008/09 outbreak season and all 15 triggered villages had decreased diarrhea episodes reported at their nearest health facilities as compared to the same period previous year.

NEPAL

- **Village Glory Procession:** After declaration of ODF, the Village Glory Procession is held in a very pompous (grand) manner. All members of the village including the nearby residents participate this event singing, dancing, blowing flutes and beating drums. It contributes to ODF monitoring and achieving sanitized condition in community.
- **Rearward and Recognition:** ODF declared VDCs and schools are awarded by District Water Supply and Sanitation Coordination Committee.
- **Joint Monitoring:** Joint monitoring by government, donors, I/NGOs and local government bodies to build up ownership and to enhance learning alliance.
- **Documentation and Dissemination:** Documentation and dissemination of success stories with due focus on activity of school and students.
- **Exposure visit:** learn the lessons from model schools and communities for upgrading the toilets and achieving basic sanitized condition/beyond ODF.

SUCCESS/INNOVATIONS

- Some of the innovative things done by children following CLTS triggering include the following: preparation of an action plan to improve the sanitation situation in the school campus; fix responsibility for keeping the school toilets clean; class-wise supervision by older students; ensure the availability of soap and water outside the school toilet; forming sanitation canbinet/club including teachers as members There have been many unintended benefits as well. Some school teachers and other functionaries have shared that after CLTS triggering with children in schools have helped in other ways that include: children not leaving the class for longer durations on the pretext of relieving themselves; reduction in consumption of *khaini* (tobacco) gutkha among adolescents; girls feeling safe and relaxed.
- In India, District Nainital a child called Rajani acted as a leader of the school children group, and along with village *pradhan* (village chief), *up-pradhan*

(deputy chief) started activities, such as: following people going for open defecation and requesting them to cover their shit with mud; asking people to construct toilets; may be simple pit toilets, as soon as possible; motivating those who have already constructed to use the toilets properly; asking women to dispose child faeces into the toilet etc.

- A girl called Savitri led a team of some small girls and started motivating people by going house to house to build makeshift toilets to stop OD immediately. Savitri shared *“It was very difficult to convince people in the village as many of them used to say that your parents have given you so much of freedom. You small girls will teach us what is right and what is wrong?”* Gradually, women started supporting these girls and a village sanitation committee was formed. To begin with, some villagers, particularly women, started building simple pit latrines just to come out of the ugly situation of OD.
- In Pragpur girl high school in Kangra district in Himachal Pradesh, there were 4 toilet units installed in school, but due to poor maintenance, all of them were in bad shape and unusable. A 8th standard girl, who happened to be the daughter of deputy president of Gram Panchayat of Pragpur, shared this during triggering (December 2007). Everyone went to see those toilets. Teachers felt ashamed as they had not done anything about this. Many girls shared that they had to wait till lunch break or at times even the whole day because they came from distant villages and there was nowhere to go. They also shared not only feeling ashamed in going every time to a couple of nearby houses (with toilets) to relieve themselves, but also missing part of important class/lecture. As a result, many of them prefer defecating in nearby naala (rivulet) in case of an emergency, instead of visiting others’ houses. Hearing this from girls, the School Principal and Pradhan, Gram Panchayat Pragpur present during triggering decided to hire a Jamadaar (cleaner) to clean the toilet once to begin with the understanding that the school children would maintain the school toilets after that on their own. GP Pragpur is now open defecation free and has received the NGP award
- A sixth standard girl named Vaishali emerged as a powerful natural leader. She announced during triggering itself that she understood the whole thing and now she would not let anyone defecate in the open. She not only motivated the head of the village to demand and construct one more toilet in the school with help of district rural development agency, but also mobilized other villagers by saying that, “stop eating shit by leaving it in the open”. Coming from a small school-going girl child, this had a profound impact on the villagers. The village is now open defecation free.
- In Got Kabok primary school, in Homabay district in Kenya, the pupils were taken through all the steps of triggering. At the end of the session they felt sufficiently triggered to contribute meaningfully to the CLTS process. On their own volition and initiative they decided that their contribution would be to dig latrine pits. They formed a team that went round the village digging pits. They did this during their free time in the evenings after classes or over the weekends. They

mainly targeted the homesteads headed by elderly persons, the sick and other vulnerable in the community. Tonny Oluoch, one of the pupils at the school said that, “We wanted to support the process in a special way, and we thought the best thing to do was to dig the pits especially for the widows and other elderly people in the village who had no one to help them... We chose to dig the pits because they are more difficult to do than constructing the walls.” After digging the pits for the disadvantaged in the community, they then went round and assisted each other dig pits in their respective homes. The contribution of these school boys made the work of latrine construction much easier for the community of GOT Kabok. This is one of the communities that has become ODF in Homabay. The role played by these school boys was quite invaluable in this achievement. This then is an indication of the potential that is there in promoting School Led Total Sanitation (SLTS). The energy and enthusiasm of the youth can meaningfully contribute to the success of the process.

- In Bangladesh it is noted that, the child-to-child approach provided a convenient framework for children's active participation as an ambassador and agents of change, not megaphones to transmit adult messages in the promotion of hygiene education and school sanitation. Children proved their potentiality and creativity by developing hygiene message by themselves and organizing cultural program which was one of the most effective activities to mobilize the elder. In addition, the demonstration of hand washing is an effective way to change the mind set up of children and community. The presence of student at schools increased. The ICDDR,B evaluation of Plan's CLTS program found that school-based promotional activities were very popular in communities and had resulted in households constructing latrines from health concerns. 125,241 students (63,287 girls and 61,954 boys) and 3,023 teachers of 507 primary schools have been implementing hygiene promotion activities in schools and catchments area. Under School Sanitation and Household Hygiene Education through child to child approach children are playing the key role to change the hygiene behaviour. Children have taken initiative to conduct baseline survey, prepared action plan and awareness sessions at school and communities in groups. The activities included are campaigns, school fairs and open days, posters and picture – making, drama and puppets, songs and poems, demonstrations, radio programme, teachers others skills, games etc.

In India some schools have become model schools by involving children's sanitation cabinet/club in supervising managing the operation and maintenance in school, under the supervision of teacher. Each Children club will ensure the availability of water out side the latrine and soap for hand washing. They do this in a rotational way and on monthly basis. Best children clubs are identified and encouraged for helping in keeping the facilities clean. Their names are mentioned during the morning assembly and where they are rewarded. This creates healthy competition among children's clubs. The children also raise funds for operation and maintenance by asking parents and well to do families to help in contributing for additional facilities in the school in cases where they have insufficient funds for construction.

LESSONS LEARNT

- Children are true catalysts. They help create an enabling environment in school and then carry the messages back home to motivate their families to improve sanitation and hygiene habits.
- Triggering children is not sufficient. Success largely depends on the understanding and knowledge of teachers. It is good to trigger children and teachers simultaneously. This would help in bringing attitudinal and behavior change not only in children but also in teachers. If teachers are not fully sensitized they may not effectively inspire enough confidence in the children or community at large to mobilize them to take action
- Children are free and frank; once they understand something they do it wholeheartedly, no matter what. Children are great motivators to make their parents understand the importance of toilet and its usage.
- ODF should ensure proper hygiene behaviour and use of sanitary toilet which is affordable acceptable and user friendly
- Long term monitoring mechanism with the support of implementing organization/education office and encouraging a reward/recognition system at local and national level is necessary to promote scale up of SLTS.
- All institutions (schools, health centers, public buildings, VDCs/Municipalities) must have child , gender and differently-abled friendly WASH facilities (including menstrual hygiene) for ODF status.
- School as an entry point for total sanitation and role played by child clubs as change agents are effective and likely to support SLTS both at school and the community.
- It is very important to work with all stakeholders, NGOs, CBOs, FBOs, VDCs, government line ministries etc for local level resource mobilization, to secure their ownership over the process, and to support community level decision making, planning and implementation in order to obtain best results, and for sustainability purposes.
- Rapport building through games served as a good entry point to get children's full involvement in the triggering process.
- Teachers and students' action beyond school into the village enhances their involvement in improving sustainability efforts at the community level. Hence, a school – community relationship is very helpful in achieving the goals of total sanitation.
- Proper Operation and maintenance of the installed infrastructure in school and village is important because if this is not done the facilities created may suffer from disrepair and become defunct. If this happens, then people will revert to OD. To maintain the school sanitation facilities, the school teachers and older children need to be sensitized and involved in the mechanism to be adopted for O&M.

CHALLENGES

- One of the key challenges in enhancing children participation in follow up activities is the fact that most of the children who are capable of undertaking such tasks are in school. The school curriculum is involving and almost requires their full time involvement. This makes it challenging for children to have sufficient spare time (in some countries) to engage in CLTS follow up activities. Some of the parents would also rather have their children attend to their studies and home work assignments, or domestic chores than support in CLTS activities in the village.
- In other cultural set ups children are not allowed to question the elders conduct even when it is apparent they have fallen short of the expected behavior. This in a way also limits children capacity to engage in effective follow ups, which may require them to ask the elders to stop open defecation.
- Sustaining ODF status of toilets in the roadside/migrated areas is very challenging, because many times they are used by strangers and passersby who are not sufficiently sensitized on the dangers of OD.
- Mobilizing capital investment required for the child, gender and differently-abled WASH facilities in institutions has been a challenge in some countries, because some local and national institutions have not prioritized WASH programmes in their budgetary allocations.
- Some adult community members do not take children's initiative seriously. They feel that children have no authority over them, and should not be allowed to operate at the same level as adults.
- Culture and traditional beliefs hindered children initiative in promoting CLTS.
- Some children fear to call shit in their vernacular/local language
- Drop out of children natural leaders as time goes by. This especially so for school children who are graduating to join another school.

TIPS

- Awareness and simple facilities can improve hygiene practices at primary schools and community level. Sustainable behavioural change in hygiene education took more time therefore the process should be institutionalized as life cycle approach.
- Rapport building through games serves as a good entry point to get children's full involvement in the triggering process
- The teachers and the principal should be invited quietly close to the ignition moment or soon after when the children are making decisions regarding future sanitation practice in their schools and villages. This affects teachers also deeply and encourages them to support children in their activities
- Children have a right to participate. This right includes participating in SLTS activities. However, this should be made "fun" for them in order to sustain their enthusiasm and interest in the activities. When their participation looks like

“work”, their interest will wane and they pull out of the activities, and instead prefer to play their usual games.

- Children can play vital role in verifying the ODF status and other sanitation indicator more objectively. It is necessary to have a strong tradition of doing verification once the claims have been made. Children from the community which is making the claim need to be asked separately by engaging them in games which can assist in determining their sanitation status. During the games they may be asked where to go for defecation. In their innocence, they will give honest answers. If they still defecate in the bush they will say so, and if they use latrines, they will likewise indicate where they go. This will help to corroborate the ODF claims.
- Appreciating and acknowledging active children in SLTS by the teachers and their parents contributes to sustaining their high motivation, and this should be done often.

SOURCES (WHERE TO FIND FURTHER INFORMATION)

- CLTS WEBSITE (www.comunityledtotalsanitation.org)