Sanitation and Hygiene
Hunter-Gatherer Thematic Note

# Moving up the sanitation ladder (sanitation markets): East and Southern Africa region

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### The hunter-gathering approach

Hunter-gathering is a process of rapidly collecting and collating information, experiences and contributions. In a workshop setting, hunter-gatherers self-select a topic they are most interested in championing and work together in groups to produce a short report (2-6 pages) by the end of the workshop – groups and topics are decided upon on the first day. Each day, dedicated time is given for people to collect relevant information from one another. Over the course of the session the groups self-organise collecting contributions and feeding into other topics. Participants are asked to collect information informally through breaks and mealtimes. They may also like to use the opportunity in plenary sessions to take notes on their particular topic and ask questions to presenters that could help them with their reports. Outputs are action-orientated, with groups asked to reflect on what should be done moving forward and recommendations for policy and practice.

The notes produced are not meant to be polished or exhaustive, and they are not peer reviewed. They are rapid explorations into priority topics, which are written and disseminated quickly in the hope that they will trigger further conversations, debate and interest. As such, they are not for citation.

***This methodology is very much a work-in-progress. Comments and suggestions to strengthen and develop the hunter-gatherer process and method, as well as the content and structure of the notes would be very welcome. Or if you wish to do a rapid exploration into a topic that interests you, please contact us: clts@ids.ac.uk***

## 1. Description of issues/challenges

- **Few results from market-based sanitation initiatives due to poor implementation**
    - Different interpretations of what sanitation marketing means.
    - Too much focus on mason training with little return due to high rates of drop-out.
    - Inability to sell products due to affordability challenges.
    - Lack of profitability among enterprises created.
    - Not creating urgent demand for improved sanitation.
    - Risk of implementing agencies becoming part of the solution (because without them sales will not be made).

- **Scale of current initiatives – are they leading to results quickly enough?**
  - There are no clear examples of market based sanitation initiatives in the region that have gone to scale. Pockets of achievements have however been recorded across countries. Examples of sanitation marketing (SanMark) interventions in Zambia, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia and Eritrea exist, but none have reached scaled-up market access. In the implementation of SNV's Sustainable Sanitation and Hygiene for All (SSH4A) programme across 8 countries, in only 3 per cent of the entire programme is sanitation access attributable to market intervention.
- **Ineffective systems for tracking and sharing results and lessons learnt**
  - Direct and indirect results on uptake of improved sanitation are hardly shared beyond the organisation implementing the programme.
  - No clear reporting on the alignment of results to the SDGs and sanitation standards to determine which part of the ladder the initiatives are contributing to.
- **Equity - reaching poorest households**
  - Few sales of products in past market based initiatives imply that the poorest households are not being reached, which questions whether market based approaches are appropriate for this segment of the population.
- **Incomplete product development**
  - Limited innovations on handwashing and other hygiene technologies.
  - No sufficient products in the market to meet different needs of various segments such as those who are disabled or elderly.
  - Equipment for other behaviours like safe disposal of child faeces have also had limited exploration.
- **Integration and sequencing of activities with demand creation approaches (e.g. CLTS) are still unclear**
- **Little consideration of services further down the sanitation chain such as pit emptying, transport and treatment**
  - Where ecological sanitation options have been tried, these were often not sustained or poorly managed.
- **Limited government support for market development**
  - Beyond approving technical standards and products, there remains no political will to drive sanitation markets, and limited country mechanisms to provide incentives for sanitation businesses, such as ease of registration or tax breaks to encourage market entry and lower the cost of products.

## 2. Current solutions (including country/ organisation)

Several solutions are being trialled to address some of the challenges listed above. Although most initiatives involve market based solutions, non-market based solutions that supported households to improve their sanitation facilities and move up the sanitation ladder were also shared.

**Non-market based solutions**

Non-market based solutions nurture the gap between conventional demand creation and market based solutions. Where households can make incremental improvements to their sanitation and hygiene facilities using locally available materials, this can be encouraged to improve the durability of toilets.

- SNV Tanzania facilitates incremental improvements of household toilets in their programme area by encouraging households to smear slabs, add a roof, and conduct other improvements to their current structures from locally available materials.
- In Uganda, village members are trained on toilet improvement strategies.
- Plan Kenya works with the community to decide on what support they need to move up the sanitation ladder. In one project area, the communities wished to improve their superstructure but were not able to access concrete blocks. Plan Kenya provided them with a block making machine, and trained artisans in the community. With this block machine, the community was able to make their own blocks, which were provided to households for free to improve their superstructure. The only cost paid by households was a small fee (<4 USD) for labour of the locally trained artisans to help construct the superstructure.
- Eritrea – using materials used for the refrigeration of fish to line pits in areas with sandy/collapsing soils; also in areas that are very rocky where people are struggling to dig a pit, they burn plastics and put water on the

ground, leave it for 1 or 2 days, and then dig the pit.

**Market-based solutions**

*Affordability*

To address the challenge of affordability, several organisations are in the middle of trying different initiatives:

- Village savings and loans
    - Plan Malawi has developed a revolving fund which has been successful in one TA. Targeting of these communities was crucial for its success: they chose communities that were already ODF, providing seed funding for the revolving fund, and also communities with already established community structures.
    - SNV Ethiopia.
    - Plan Kenya.
- Flexible payment – SNV Zambia
    - Developed a self-finance mechanism.
    - Chain microfinancing – savings are pulled into more savings, such as team benefits, at the end of the day.
    - They also encourage the use of a barter system for payment as well as instalment payments.
- Incremental upgrading – Ethiopia
    - Ethiopia's seasonal roadshows encourage the purchase of a different range of products for upgrading to meet the need of households at different times.
- MFI partnership
    - Transform in Ethiopia (Plan Ethiopia) has developed partnerships with microfinance institutions.

It is not clear  what result of these initiatives is or whether they are reaching the poorest households. It is likely they are unable to do so because those who can participate in these initiatives are already better off than others.

**Integration with demand creation approaches (CLTS)**

Several participants cited experiences of household readiness to move immediately from OD to improved sanitation facilities. There was a general agreement that demand for the products is important to have regardless of when  in the process they were introduced. Experiences of integrating market based approaches with demand creation are outlined below.

- Technologies included at triggering – Ethiopia is trialling this approach due to their experience of CLTS only producing unimproved options. They are still waiting to determine the results of this new approach.
- After ODF is declared – Plan Malawi introduces improved products and village savings and loan schemes.
- After triggering and during follow-ups – SNV Tanzania introduces improved products; Uganda Sanitation Fund (USF) provides guidance on how to improve toilets using existing materials in the community or in the markets (improving on traditional toilets).
- In Zambia, SNV realised that sales were low when products were shared with households after triggering. They decided to pilot the introduction of products at triggering, where a local mason was available to explain the options after demonstrating what a traditional toilet would cost. Within 2 months 60 toilets were sold in the pilot area, which led SNV to believe that supply chains must be in place even before triggering.

**Product development for different segments**

- For different segments:
    - Several toilet designs were available for disabled households, including raised platforms – SNV Zambia, Tanzania, Kenya.
- For hygiene:
    - Two innovative handwashing stations developed – SNV Zambia.
    - Inclusion of hygiene products (e.g. taps for buckets) in seasonal roadshows – Transform Ethiopia, SNV Zambia (through their 'Theatre for transformation' programme).

**Development of profitable business models**

- Good market research is important – SNV
- Sanitation committees – SNV Zambia
    - Instead of having just one mason, spread people, sales people – 50 per cent women and 50 cent pent men (women are good with sales) – as a unit, driving the sales process of the products that they have; sanitation and hygiene background is not a major core skill needed and they are instead picked based on their willingness to engage in sanitation.
- Sales and marketing
    - New sales strategy [R = A+C+E] – SNV Tanzania.
    - Seasonal roadshows – Ethiopia, SNV Zambia.

## 3. Emerging questions

- Explore more non-market based solutions for moving up the sanitation ladder e.g.:
    - Targeted subsidies.
    - Community support mechanisms.
- Scale – search for solutions that have worked at scale in the region.
- Further research is required to understand what is needed for environmental sanitation in rural areas, such as options for pit emptying.

## 4. Recommendations

- Monitor the results of current initiatives to see if they can scale, document and share both successes and failures.
- Products should be ready before triggering to capitalise on demand created; entry of these products into communities will depend on the community context and experience of sequencing in that country. In any instance it must be demand that leads from the start.
- Encourage incremental upgrades, including local solutions and innovations to improve durability of toilets.
- Increase public private partnerships; encourage the private sector to engage in sanitation e.g. cement producers, plastic producers, to further lower the cost of toilets and market shaping. Also work closely with marketing professionals.
- Affordability – figure out what support is needed for households to upgrade (internal and external support mechanisms).
- Explore and advocate for government support for market based approaches.
- Safely managed sanitation – look into the need for options further down the sanitation chain.

## 5. Comments from the audience

- Recognise that WASH people are not good at selling things; it is not what they are designed to do; the sector needs more partnerships and to bring in marketing professionals for sales.
- In Asia market shaping has been successful. When there isn't a perceived market because demand hasn't been created, build demand and persuade producers/the private sector of the potential market of 100 million people who don't have an improved toilet - there is a need to think about encouraging people to move into that area.
    - SNV programme in Nepal – a market shaping initiative held sanitation cafes and invited local entrepreneurs and producers with no interest in sanitation or getting involved in the programme. They presented that the rate of toilet building was very high and ran through the numbers over the next year on how many households were expecting to build toilets - the private sector got interested. So where triggering was happening first and there are plans to move up, there is opportunity to connect people (market facilitation).