

Tracking sustainability: 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 during 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The notes produced are not meant to be polished or exhaustive, and they are not peer reviewed.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 As such, they are not for citation.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

- Sustainability of ODF in a number of communities has always been a challenge especially in the rural areas in the Southern and Eastern African region. For example:
 - A recent study by United Purpose in Malawi has shown that there is a slippage of 14% on the sampled villages that were already declared ODF (between time of declaration and the period of this study (de Gabrielle and Ngwale, 2017).
 - Eritrea reported an average slippage of 27%.
 - Uganda an average slippage of no less than 30%.
- Issues identified as the main challenges towards sustainability include:



- Slippage – continuation of follow-ups after phasing out of the project and lack of deliberate efforts to include slippage in the monitoring protocols.
- Lack of clear definitions of ODF in some countries - lack of consistence in verification, certification and other elements hence difficulties to track sustainability.
- No systematic follow-ups after triggering.

The main issues attributing to this slippage, according to the discussions and observations, include finding ODF convenient or easier; the inability to pay for the cost of construction; fatigue of repairing latrines annually; vulnerable groups' lack of support from the community to help construct latrines; cultural and religious misconceptions and many other elements. In many cases from physical observation, a number of latrines become full, or the super structure damaged resulting in very low usage of such latrines. Usage is reduced due to disgust (for full latrines, full with maggots), fear of latrines collapsing (for damaged super structure especially in the rainy seasons) (*Observations during field visit at Genda Village, Karatu, Tanzania – April 2018*). Another key emerging issue that was also discussed as affecting sustainability is the increase in low social cohesion groups like pastoralists and fishing communities.

However, despite slippage of ODF communities in the region, there still exists some community members that remain ODF. The major motivating factors for such communities to remain ODF include: the convenience and comfort of the latrine; privacy and security; shame and disgust about defecating in the bush; health concerns (prevention of waterborne and airborne diseases); responding to sanitation, hygiene promotion campaigns; and fear of community by-laws (by the chief).

Monitoring, verification and certification are essential for ensuring the success of CLTS efforts (Pasteur, 2017). In this discussion, we will consider monitoring the sustainability of these efforts, with a special focus on ODF communities. Monitoring at all levels (community, local Government and at national level) is critical on the path to ensuring sustainability and must be done systematically. Post-ODF monitoring is of profound importance as it ensures that the gains made in the ODF period are sustained over a long time, improve the range of positive hygiene behaviours, ensures inclusion and most importantly, promotes the use of improved sanitation facilities as a way to climb the sanitation ladder.

2. Current solutions (including country/ organisation)

While the initial focus of most CLTS programs is behaviour change and elimination of OD, an equally important critical element is the sustainability of that behaviour change and ODF status. Post-ODF follow ups and monitoring are essential for the sustainability of CLTS efforts. This is the phase that can propel the communities' move from basic latrine technologies to improved technologies that can even withstand some harsh weather conditions. Some elements that were discussed as key to track sustainability are:

- **Systematic regular sustainability checks on sampled communities** – This has been tested by UNICEF in Ethiopia and other Western African Countries. This is usually done biannually but implementing partners can propose their timeline to undertake such monitoring checks in close collaboration with the Government. These monitoring checks must also be encouraged to be conducted by the communities themselves in addition to the external routine checks. A similar example is the issue of delegated monitoring as is the case with Tanzania and also Eritrea whereby monitoring officers have been allocated households for routine checks.
- **Use of existing local structures** – In Malawi, local leaders (chiefs) and existing structures (like Village Heath Committees) have been capacitated and oriented to undertake monitoring. This included the setting up of accountability structures from community to national level. For example the community committees reporting to District Coordinating Team (DCT) and the DCT reporting to the National oversight bodies like the National ODF Task Force. Alongside the existing structures, identification and use of key influencers within the communities has also been tried and is working. Similar observations were reported from Uganda.
- **Benchmarking** – Establishment of clear baseline and measuring progress against the baseline data. This has been tried in Kenya and informs the leadership on areas that need improvement according to the measured data.
- **Institutional triggering for leaders to take an active role in sanitation issues** – Leaders (District executive and legislature) and public institutions (schools, health centres) act as change agents. This has worked in Tanzania, Uganda and Malawi.
- **Community by-laws enforcement** – sanctions and rewards.
- **Adoption of CLTS as one of key performance indicators by Governments** (Tanzania and Uganda).

3. Emerging questions

- How reliable is the data? How do we keep those that collect data motivated? These questions are very critical considering that most of the work that we do in rural sanitation depends heavily on volunteers?
- Effective field coaching on Monitoring – plan on how and when to have clear planning for field coaching sessions and spot checks with volunteers and with a higher level that supports and receives reports from smallest unit.
- Consistence of data collection tools – financing mechanism for procuring tools and distributing them to targeted community.
- Increase monitoring in low social cohesion groups – what indicators can be developed to measure sanitation and hygiene elements on such groups?
- San Mark as a way of ensuring ODF sustainability? – Can we track improved latrines at community level to assess sustainability?

4. Recommendations

- **Data quality and accuracy** – Governments must take the lead in the establishment of National Monitoring and Evaluation Frameworks. This will ensure that data is effectively collected, shared and utilised. All implementing and development partners must feed their input into this National M & E framework. This also entails that Government must be responsible for harmonisation of all data collection tools used by different organisations.
- **Clear definition of monitoring and verification protocols** where such do not exist (for example Uganda) – Government must quickly move in to clear any existing ambiguities and review of all outdated policies.
- **Implementing partners must go beyond measuring the numbers** – All WASH implementing organisations must make a deliberate effort to also measure the change in social norms.
- **Government and implementing partners must set aside resources to undertake periodic systematic checks on sampled communities.** For example SNV sets aside funds to undertake National HH survey despite not having that under the DfID project they are implementing.
- **Increase in budgetary support towards delegated monitoring activities** as well as district health officers to undertake CLTS spot-checks in their communities (the case of Uganda as having CLTS as part of key performance indicators for health inspectors).
- **Governments with support from implementing partners to review their sanitation policies** to take into consideration emerging issues, such as the low social cohesion groups, and how to integrate improved sanitation indicators into sustainability monitoring.
- **All implementing partners and Governments to consider integration of safely managed sanitation and hygiene concepts into the sustainability indicators.**
- **Implementing partners must ensure systematic follow-ups** even after project closure. Deliberate efforts must be made to allocate budget and come up with costs for such systematic follow-ups.

5. Resources and further reading

- Pasteur, K. (2017) [Tracking Progress and Sustainability: Monitoring, Verification and Certification of CLTS](#), CLTS Knowledge Hub Learning Brief 2, Brighton: IDS