Communities in George Village, in Neno District, have joined efforts to eradicate open defecation (OD) practice in their village after World Vision Malawi (WVM) through its Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Program triggered the community using the Community Total Led Sanitation (CLTS) approach.

During a transect walk with children in the community, it was discovered that at least three out of every ten households did not have latrines and defecate in the open. This was evidenced by several ‘shitting’ points that were identified in the bush during the walk. However, at other households, the ‘shit’ was found right behind the living area.

According to a 74 year-old community member in the village, Marita, messages about the importance of using a latrine have been disseminated such that she constructed one on her own. “Those lazy people are the ones polluting the bush such that one needs to be careful when collecting firewood or you risk stepping on shit,” she said.

However, Marita acknowledged that she was not aware that defecating in a latrine without a drop-hole cover is the same as defecating in the open because flies can still carry the germs and land on their food. “I will start covering my latrine hole right away,” she said.

In the midst of the meeting, children also presented to the group what they discussed and agreed as action plan in their children’s group. Among other things, they said they will make a deliberate effort to encourage their parents to construct latrines with drop-hole covers after discovering the effect of open defecation.

“Wherever possible, we will also assist our parents with construction materials like grass or making bricks. But as of now, we are requesting everyone in this village to use the few latrines available,” said one of the children’s group leaders, Mwandida Frank.

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No More Exchanging Meals with Flies  …continued from p.1

At the end of the meeting, George communities agreed that every household should have a latrine with a drop-hole cover in two months time, but in the interim they will be using the available latrines when they want to defecate to ensure that their village is  OD Free (ODF).

According to the WVM South Regional Manager, Harry Wala, the CLTS training is a deliberate move by WVM to build up the capacity of its staff so that they can impart knowledge to their community on the prevention of diarrheal diseases and other water related diseases, but also to equip them with practical facilitation skills of CLTS approaches.

“WVM has chosen to integrate CLTS approach in its national strategy programming in trying to scale up sanitation coverage in Malawi in order to contribute to Malawi Government’s objective of improving access to adequate and sustainable sanitation for all Malawians by 2015. The participants in this training are those who are expected to roll out CLTS campaigns in their various work stations,” explained Wala.

CLTS is an innovative approach for mobilizing communities to completely eliminate OD. Communities are facilitated to conduct their own appraisal and analysis of OD and take their own action to become ODF. The approach focuses on behavior change needed to ensure real and sustainable improvements, investing in community mobilization instead of hardware and shifting the focus from toilet construction for individual households to the creation of ODF villages. By raising awareness that as long as even a minority continues to defecate in the open everyone is at risk of diseases, CLTS triggers the community’s desire for collective change, propels people into action and encourages innovation, mutual support and appropriate local solutions, thus leading to greater ownership and sustainability.

PROMOTION OF MULTI-SECTORAL APPROACH IN KASUNGU
By: Daniel Gamadzi, Environmental Health Officer, Kasungu District, chifdg@yahoo.co.uk

The WASH sector in Kasungu District took advantage of a SUN (Scaling Up Nutrition) approach implemented by UNICEF to increase its reach to communities. The core team for SUN is multi-sectoral in nature and is composed of different personnel from the following line ministries: Health, Education, Agriculture, and Community Development. These key ministries have responsibilities for implementation of WASH activities, health in the communities through HSAs, education in schools through sanitation masters/SHN, and community development through the CBCCs and CDAs. Therefore, Kasungu decided to incorporate WASH and nutrition activities as they are sister programs.

In terms of progress, at District level it has proved to be successful because of shared work plans to working as a team for implementation activities. During open days, as local nutritional foods are displayed we also promote hygiene and sanitation through demonstrations. In one case a dummy household was set up with all sanitary facilities as well as demonstrations on hand washing. It is very promising that extension staff are started realizing the importance of working in a team and are working towards its success.
Extending the reach of Sanitation and Hygiene messages in Nkhotakota

By: Roy Khonyongwa, Executive Director, Hygiene Village Project, roykhony@yahoo.com

Hygiene Village Project (HVP) is implementing a sanitation and hygiene promotion project in Nkhotakota District with funding from the Global Sanitation Fund. To date, HVP has triggered 40 villages, in TAs Malengachanzi and Mwazama, in which follow-up activities are underway.

As a complement to the CLTS activities, HVP has been using public messages to increase their reach into villages. A banner with a special slogan has been designed for Nkhotakota District. The banner is always mounted on the top of HVP vehicle which is noticeably positioned so that onlookers are able to see and read without problems. The message (NKHOTAKOTA WATSOPANO – UKHONDO KHOMO LILILONSE) is quite short and onlookers can finish reading it at a glance or in a matter of seconds, even if the vehicle is moving fast. The vehicle is also equipped with a PA system in order to play a sanitation and hygiene themed song that was composed specifically for people of TAs Malengachanzi and Mwazama.

The vehicle has so been to many villages in Nkhotakota. The banner is always on the vehicle and wherever the vehicle goes the song is played and repeated.

HVP believes that it is for this reason that latrines have been constructed, people have mounted handwashing facilities and have started washing hands with soap even in the areas where triggering has not taken place.

ADVANTAGES, AND EFFECTS OF THE INNOVATION

• The approach is cost-effective because it is integrated with other activities. I.e. whenever the vehicle leaves the office for any planned or unplanned activity (i.e. going to the market), the message is disseminated.

• The song is composed for the target community. As a result, villagers become excited when they listen to a song specifically targeting them and sing along whenever the song is playing on the PA system.

• With the use of a PA system, the messages have a wider coverage, including those who are in their homes and cannot see the banner on the vehicle.

Many villagers have constructed latrines and started washing their hands with soap even before actually being triggered. Even though HVP has triggered only 40 villages, results from other villages are quite overwhelming. Before HVP’s interventions in the target areas, hand washing facility coverage was at 0%.

However after triggering and hygiene promotion campaigns the coverage has risen to 41.18%, the percentage for Drop Hole Covers (DHC) has risen from 2% to 47%, while latrine coverage has risen to 73%.
Institutionalization of Water Investment Triggering in Mangochi

Belinda Li, African Programs Staff, Engineers Without Borders Canada, With files from Lisa Boyd, Lauren Somers, and the Mangochi District Water Office

In Issue 13 of S.H.I.T.S, an approach based on Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) was introduced as a way to encourage communities to raise money to pay for waterpoint maintenance and repairs. This approach, called Water Investment Triggering (WIT), used techniques from CLTS such as incitement of communal shame, fear and disgust with current community practices (i.e. use of unprotected water sources), and facilitating of questions to bring about discussions and debates within the community. Once triggered, a community creates an action plan and uses their own resources to complete the activities. WIT was piloted in Mangochi District by Water Monitoring Assistants (WMAs) from the District Water Office, in collaboration with an EWB staff member.

Like CLTS, follow-ups are necessary to keep communities accountable to their action plans and for District staff to be aware of their progress. These follow-ups typically take place one month after the triggering. Another follow-up should take place three to six months afterwards to evaluate long-term behaviour change and promote continual financial investment in water point maintenance.

Nine triggerings and five follow-ups have taken place. Triggerings were most successful in villages who had an existing protected waterpoint and who had already prior experience in fundraising and maintenance. Triggering villages that did not already have a protected waterpoint proved to be a challenge, because the only post-triggering action that the communities could take was to submit an application for a new borehole, and/or agree to regularly treat water from an unprotected source (i.e. using chlorine tablets or another method of water purification). The District Water Office, however, has very limited funding for new boreholes; therefore, triggered communities applying for boreholes may become disappointed or demotivated when they do not promptly receive a borehole.

Of the five initial follow-up visits that took place, four villages had completed their action plans. Activities included: creating or revamping Water Point Committees, collecting money for spare parts, and submitting a formal application for a new borehole.

After the success of the initial triggerings and follow-ups, the WMAs were excited about WIT and planned to continue to use it as a tool in monitoring of operation and maintenance of waterpoints. In the implementation, several challenges were identified such as:

- Other work—including water point surveying, borehole construction, and sanitation marketing—took precedence;
- Lack of a specific District Water Office staff member responsible for coordinating WIT; and
- Multiple fuel related challenges, including: long delays in disbursing funding for fuel, general fuel shortages, and a lack of planning to allocate sufficient fuel for WIT-related travel.

It was found possible for the District Water Office to address these problems by: (1) developing and using a management system to plan, track and evaluate field activities, thereby improving office/staff coordination; (2) better planning fuel allocation in advance, taking into consideration the fuel needs for upcoming WIT activities; and (3) designating a single staff member as the office's WIT coordinator.

Overall, the concept of WIT demonstrates a way that Districts can and should be utilizing their limited resources in a creative way to improve on operations and maintenance issues; however, this case study also shows that, as a self-contained activity without an ongoing support system, WIT is difficult to sustain. This learning is not exclusive to WIT, and it is necessary to recognize that CLTS cannot be treated as an independent activity either. The management systems that have been built to support and sustain CLTS must also be strengthened in order to provide the necessary coordination and resources for ongoing implementation and success.

If you are interested in learning more about WIT, please contact Belinda at belindali@ewb.ca or the Mangochi District Water Office at dwo.mangochi@gmail.com.
Songs of joy engulfed Mtungulutsi Primary School ground in Zomba District as communities from 14 villages in Traditional Authority Mlumbe marched and danced to the drum beat while celebrating the clean communities they have now after World Vision Malawi (WVM) in collaboration with stakeholders from the District council triggered the community using Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) approach.

The WVM Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Program Coordinator for Chingale Area Development Programme (ADP), a catchment area for WVM, Eva Ngoleka Phiri, attributed the success to the close partnership between WVM and the District stakeholders but also with communities in the villages, which increased tolerance and understanding throughout the process.

Phiri acknowledged the impact of CLTS approach saying it propels people into action and encourages innovation, mutual support and appropriate local solutions, thus leading to greater ownership and sustainability.

She said communities in Chingale came up with a new design for hand-washing facility where they put two peddle sticks: one that turn the water bottle to a pouring position and another for returning the bottle back in place. This is to ensure that no one touches the hand-washing facility with hands before or after washing hands to avoid contracting or transmitting germs.

“The other innovation they came up with which has been very helpful is the planting of plants below the hand-washing facility. This acts as a monitoring tool to ensure that every household is using the latrine and the hand-washing facility. They agreed that when the plants are found withering during a surprise monitoring visit, it’s a sign that the household is not using either one or both facilities and they were reminded of the importance of using both,” she said.

T/A Mlumbe congratulated the 14 villages that have attained ODF status and encouraged the remaining communities to follow suit. “I am in the forefront supporting this initiative because I am aware of its great impact in saving our lives from preventable diseases but will also give us time to concentrate on other development activities.

In his speech, the WVM WASH Program Manager, Peter Matipwiri, assured the assembly that WVM will continue working with them in saving lives of children. Having open defecation free communities is the onset of a health and educated generation.

Matipwiri also mentioned of WVM’s interest in WASH activities in schools saying this is a long lasting solution of dealing away with preventable waterborne diseases since children will grow up knowledgeable of good hygiene practices.

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Promoting ODF Through Community Radio

Interview by: Holly Lafontaine, Engineers Without Borders, hollylafontaine@ewb.ca

In its quest to promote health messages to the communities, Mzimba Community Radio (MCR) introduced a free of cost health programme called “programme ya zaumoyo.” The programme airs Thursdays and Saturdays with the aim of reaching out to the masses with various health-related messages. Mzimba South District Environmental Health Office has taken initiative to use MCR to share the Open Defecation Free (ODF) Strategy to communities throughout the District. Jella Chimwemwe and radio host – Mr. Chipeta, developed a 30 minute program to encourage community action toward an ODF Malawi and tackled issues such as subsidies, the use of local resources, and strong community leadership.

Jella, how did you come across this opportunity?

“There has normally been a cordial working relationship between MCR and Mzimba District Health Office (DHO). Mzimba DHO has been using MCR to promote various health messages to communities related to cholera sensitization, prevention and control - at a relatively subsidised cost. Since health is the backbone of development, MCR realised that it can take part in the promotion of health messages and has a social responsibility to support these health initiatives. Hence, the free of cost programme was introduced with the hope of getting up to date information from the health office to share with the people of Mzimba.

With the Open Defecation Free (ODF) target approaching, I took an initiative to arrange with MCR to share the ODF strategy with the purpose of reaching out to several stakeholders in the District including chiefs, religious leaders, extension workers, etc.”

What were the key messages shared?

- The government of Malawi through the Ministry of Health developed and launched The Open Defecation Free (ODF) Strategy to have ODF Malawi by 2015.
- Mzimba can reach ODF by 2015 if all the stakeholders in the District (people, chiefs, religious leaders, extension workers, etc.) work as a team. Each stakeholder has a role to play.
- People in Mzimba should not wait for subsidies or help from government or any partners for them to achieve ODF by 2015.
- People should really take action to construct latrines with locally available resources once they realise the health benefits of using them.
- Let us improve on existing toilets in market places, schools, health centres, and all institutions, to make them clean and user friendly. This will ensure that we are not only promoting sanitation in the household but encouraging action and development of the whole of society.

The office of the DHO is ready to assist in choosing various latrine options and providing guidance for those communities that want to change and that make an effort to change. This initiative is one of the many opportunities to share the ODF strategy and encourage many stakeholders in Mzimba to achieve ODF Malawi 2015. If you have an idea or experience sharing the ODF strategy or promoting progress toward ODF, please highlight it in the next edition of SHiTS.

Future Radio Shows

With much excitement and success after the first show, there are plans to bring active chiefs, natural leaders, and innovative community members on the air in future shows. If your District or organization has used the radio to outreach to communities for sanitation and hygiene or if you have a unique idea for a radio show, please share in the next publication of SHiTS! We look forward to your ideas and innovations.

For more information please contact

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S.H.i.T.S. NEWSLETTER

This newsletter, produced by the ODF Malawi Taskforce and coordinated by EWB and WES-Network, reviews learning and experiences of Malawi local government sanitation and hand washing implementation and their collaborating NGO partners. It includes contributions from District and central-level leaders within the sanitation & hygiene sub-sector.

ODF Task Force Malawi

The Malawi ODF Task Force is lead by the MoWDI and chaired by the MoH. It consists of key stakeholders at the national level who can provide diverse opinions, direction and help plan a way forward for achieving the ODF Malawi goal as well as for the National Hand Washing Campaign. The task force is responsible for the coordination of the ODF strategy 2015 at the National level, facilitation of orientation and technical support for partners, sharing experiences and documentation related to the ODF strategy, consolidation of progress reporting, and assistance in upholding articles outlined in the strategy.

Engineers without Borders Canada (EWB)

In Malawi, EWB collaborates with government, donor and NGO partners to enhance the sustained adoption of sanitation and hygiene behaviours. EWB’s focuses on providing technical assistance to the Malawi sanitation & hygiene sub-sector for local government sanitation programmes, facilitating learning exchange between all WASH stakeholders in Malawi, developing monitoring & evaluation tools, coaching District sanitation leaders to help them refine their programmes for maximum community impact, and providing District experiences to policy discussions at the central level.

The Water and Environmental Sanitation Network (WES Network) is a membership based Civil Society network that coordinates the work of over 50 local and international NGOs working in the water, sanitation and hygiene subsector in Malawi. WES Network envisions sustainable access to safe water and improved sanitation for all in Malawi. Its mission is enhanced coordination, advocacy and knowledge sharing among Network membership for provision of high quality standards and sustainable water and environmental sanitation services in Malawi.

To submit articles, innovations, or comments please send an e-mail to shitsmalawi@gmail.com

ODF celebrations in Chingale ADP – Zomba

The guest of honor at the function was the Director of Administration for Zomba District Council, MacDonald Kalongonda, who represented the DC. In his remarks, Kalongonda thanked WVM for responding positively to the WASH needs in Zomba.

“We are celebrating 14 villages that have attained ODF here but we know that there are several communities that are also cerebrating easy access to potable water from boreholes which WVM is drilling in Chingale ADP. This is accelerating the pace at which Malawi is contributing to the Millennium Development Goal number seven which looks at halving the population of people without access to sustainable safe water and sanitation, he explained.

The 14 villages that have attained ODF status include: Mlemba, Mikundi 3, Sikamu 3, Makupeta, Matandika, Mailosi, Kawisa, Liwasa, Mikaele, Aifa, Chibwana, Nturuma 1, Nturuma 2 and Nturuma 3.

According to the Supervisor for Health Surveillance Assistants at Mkasala Health Center, Lucy Chinguwo, medical reports from the health centre where all the above villages get their treatment indicate a 50 percent reduction in waterborne diseases from March this year when these communities became ODF.

Chinguwo said the ODF status has also reduced malaria cases reported at the health centre by 70 percent as the communities are also encouraged to keep their surrounding clean but also slash grasses to ensure that all potential mosquito breeding places are destroyed.

“This will save government’s funds which would have been allocated to treat the communities in the 14 villages from malaria and diarrhea cases. On the other hand, this will relieve us from the huge workloads which we normally have especially during the rainy season,” she said.