

# **The Bamako CLTS Consensus: What works and traps to avoid**

## **Regional Sharing and Learning Workshop for francophone Africa Bamako, 29 November – 3 December 2010**

There is now considerable experience worldwide with taking CLTS to scale with quality. There are many challenges but also many encouraging examples of growing success. The points which follow are intended as a summary of some of the key lessons learnt. They are organized under the headings of topics identified as priorities by participants from francophone West Africa and discussed in the workshop. This document presents the proposals approved by the participants of the Bamako workshop.

### **Topics :**

**Starting CLTS in a Country**

**Training**

**Triggering**

**Post-Triggering Follow up**

**Certification**

**Post-ODF and Sustainability**

**Going to Scale with Quality**

**Donor Funding for CLTS**

**Adoption by Government and  
Harmonisation with Donors and NGOs**

**Urban Applications**

**Documentation and Networking**

**Conclusion**

### **Starting CLTS in a Country**

#### ***What works***

- Organize the coordination of relevant decision-makers.
- Conduct more than one training in a country with experienced trainers, and keep track of the output of the trainings.
- Identify trainers and facilitators with aptitude for CLTS. Try to persuade their organizations to release them to work full-time on CLTS. Enable them to work in teams with mutual support.

- Focus on a cluster of communities favorable for CLTS and reasonably geographically accessible (for favorable conditions see The Handbook pages 14 - 15). Avoid working in an area with a large on-going incompatible programme.
- When some communities are ODF, bring senior decision-makers to visit, and also expose them to the experience of triggering.
- Identify and network with champions.
- See also *What works* below.

### ***Traps to avoid***

See also *Traps to Avoid* below.

## **Training**

### ***What works***

- Distinguish training for facilitation from training for decision makers. What follows relates to training for facilitation.
- Try to select sympathetic participants that are likely to be able to devote time later to facilitation.
- Present all the tools comprehensively during training, especially those targeting children (see CLTS Manual, pages 20-41).
- Insist on training for facilitation that is hands-on in real time with communities.
- Employ only trainers who are personally experienced in hands-on triggering and who have a track record of communities they have triggered becoming ODF.
- Integrate local languages as far as possible in the training.
- Include the availability of a handwashing device and soap/ash in the criteria for ODF.
- Inform the learners that training of masons has to be done at the appropriate time: after ODF, especially to avoid the suppression of community innovations.

### ***Traps to avoid***

- Training confined to the classroom.
- Facilitation training by trainers inexperienced in triggering and/or who lack a track record of communities ODF.

- Cascade training (training of trainers of trainers).
- Training without follow up support for those trained.
- Mixing approaches that are not compatible (PHAST, etc.).

## **Triggering**

### ***What works***

- See pages 20-41 of The Handbook on CLTS.
- Choose the right moment, for instance seasons when people are less busy - often after harvest; or when the soil is easier to dig.
- Trigger first in communities with favorable conditions (small, homogeneous etc. See The Handbook pages 14-17 ).
- Work separately with children and, if really necessary, also with women.
- Either in triggering or very early in follow up:
  - o Include handwashing (to avoid eating one's own shit).
  - o Facilitate the identification of vulnerable people in the community and who will help them build a toilet.
- Ensure a good time management.
- CLTS can also be triggered where there already are latrines.

### ***Traps to avoid***

- Showing pictures and prices of latrine types as part of triggering.
- To suggest a model latrine from another community without existing demand.
- Making promises of material support.

## **Post-Triggering Follow up**

### ***What works***

- See pages 42-55 of The Handbook on CLTS.
- Include handwashing (if not in triggering).
- Cover identifying vulnerable community members and who will help them (unless in triggering) (page 49).
- Use mobile phones where possible for regular contact and encouragement to Natural Leaders and others when visits in person are not feasible.
- Give orientation and basic advice on latrine construction (e.g. pit-hole covers), with reference to practices observed in other communities, to ensure minimum standards with adequate sustainability.
- Monitoring is best done by a group of people, because it allows for acceleration of the process compared to monitoring done by individuals.
- Mobilization can also be used to cover diverse other topics (sanitation, health, drinking water, education, local community...).
- All actors in the follow up must have clearly defined responsibilities.

### ***Traps to avoid***

- Triggering without follow up or without adequate follow up.
- To think that follow-up doesn't need a budget.
- To train masons at a too early stage (especially related to the construction of slabs and covers), as this can block the villagers' creativity. This creativity must be given the opportunity to be expressed.

### **Certification**

#### ***What works***

- See pages 54-55 of The Handbook.
- Make up verification teams with a mix of people such as Natural Leaders, people from Government, NGOs, local government, etc.
- Define simple, clear, verifiable criteria for ODF status. The definition process has to be participatory.

- Apply verification criteria which are well understood by communities, and which are assessed in a transparent way
- Have a harmonized certification method that allows the evaluation of all communities equally.
- Certification is the object of a document validated by one (or several) competent authorities.
- Have verification processes which are neither so strict that very few communities are certified ODF nor so lax that few or none are ever failed.
- Include handwashing in the criteria.
- Ensure that the ODF status is celebrated strongly, and invite many people (religious, media, authorities...).

### ***Traps to avoid***

- Allow a large build up of communities claiming to be ODF but not yet verified.
- Limit oneself to self-declaration of ODF status.

### **Post-ODF and Sustainability**

#### ***What works***

- Continued follow up after ODF.
- Celebrate ODF on anniversaries.
- Maintain or create a community committee for follow up.
- Put in place periodic meetings and networking between natural leaders of ODF communities.
- Move on from ODF communities to ODF municipalities, Districts and then Regions and organize high-profile national celebrations for the realization of ODF at each level.
- Create a national pool and network of successful Natural Leaders as facilitators/community consultants.
- Encourage the community to stay alert, for instance through a system of sanctions against OD.
- Encourage participation of communities in ODF verification in other communities.
- Arrange exchange visits to different communities already ODF to encourage the communities.

- Trigger or encourage communities to move on to other activities like solid and liquid waste management, animal waste management, and other communal activities.
- For technical solutions search the Internet. For flooding and for collapsing sand, see the experience from WaterAid Kenya, and especially the “wattle” or basket-weave pit lining.
- Encourage local initiatives and develop the supply side so that households are able to climb the sanitation ladder: Identify potential and existing entrepreneurs who can provide access to WASH hardware , material and consumables for ODF communities, including potties for babies; Create micro-enterprises in communities to supply latrine hardware; encourage the creation of other community projects for auto-development in ODF villages, etc.
- Have a post-ODF protocol for follow up after ODF (not yet known to have been tried).

### ***Traps to avoid***

- Designating who should be Natural Leaders.
- Abandoning the community.
- Pushing sanitation marketing before effective demand exists.

### **Going to Scale with Quality**

#### ***What works***

- Before doing any scaling up, conduct a pilot, and learn the lessons from that pilot.
- Based on a pilot leading to ODF communities, define a sequence of step-by-step activities for training, triggering and follow-up for field staff while allowing flexibility for innovation.
- Establish a quantitative monitoring table of achievements, giving numbers triggered, progress with latrines, communities ODF etc. Present these to key people, in key meetings etc.
- Develop a plan of action for scaling up with a timetable and costs.
- Encourage and form a queue for triggering and follow up (of communities, municipalities, Districts) in which those who ask first are first served.
- Be alert in identifying and supporting champions in communities.
- Identify and rely on those trainers and facilitators who are effective. Try to ensure that they are working full time on CLTS.
- Be sure frontline staff thoroughly understand and practice the new approach and its difference from previous approaches.

- Use GIS/GPS to map the follow up from triggering. (Mobile phones can be combined with GIS).
- Promote competition to reach ODF between communities.
- Be alert for informal processes that are contributing to going to scale.
- Whenever there is a big lag between communities triggered and those ODF, halt triggering, find out why, and concentrate on follow up and remedial action.
- Use audio-visual media to witness, record and share milestone events, including triggering, ODF celebrations and Natural Leaders in action in other communities.
- Be alert and seize unexpected opportunities when they arise (e.g. to involve a celebrity for the ODF celebration in a village).
- Identify and advertise outstanding Natural Leaders who can be contracted for triggering and follow up (champions).
- Continuous lobbying in order to convince other implementing agencies/donors to develop CLTS.
- Use mobile phones for continuous communication with (and among) Natural Leaders.
- Conduct surveys and document the changes people perceive in their lives.

### ***Traps to avoid***

- Certifying communities ODF without meeting all agreed criteria.
- Failing to recognize that ODF is only a milestone on a journey with far still to go.

### **Donor Funding for CLTS**

#### ***What works***

- Prepare advocacy materials on sanitation problems in your country, with graphs of MDGs. Include bullet points on cost-effectiveness of investing in sanitation. Ensure that estimates are well founded.
- Try to ensure CLTS or related approach is part of Government or Regional strategy.
- Trigger a cluster of villages with the lowest coverage of latrines. This is to give a clear before and after picture, on paper and in the field.

- Take donors to see the results of CLTS in the field, where possible including a triggering occasion.
- Calculate and be ready to present the software costs (mobilization before triggering, triggering, post triggering, follow up, certification and inauguration, follow up by using video, ...) for comparison with other approaches. Do not forget a margin for error in your analysis.
- Participate in all coordination meetings about sanitation and be recognized as a significant player.
- Identify and talk to the consultants who design the donors' strategies.
- Be aware of donors' programmes in the field of sanitation, so as to know possible entry points for CLTS.
- Let Government and implementing partners go together to see donors.

### ***Traps to avoid***

- Don't be too ambitious to start with.
- Starting advocacy too strongly before you have something to show on the ground.
- Claiming ownership of success. Encourage others especially Government to take ownership and credit as their programme.
- Mixing with other approaches, such as programmes with subsidies.

### **Adoption by Government and Harmonisation with Donors and NGOs**

#### ***What works***

- Advocate for CLTS based on its potential for achieving the MDGs, and recognition that traditional latrines with covers meet the JMP (Joint Monitoring Programme by WHO/UNICEF to monitor the water and sanitation MDG) definition of improved sanitation.
- Be sure to engage with the right agency in government responsible for sanitation. Encourage the government to take on responsibility to lead and develop the process.
- Lobby for flexibility in programmes and projects in the pipeline that might affect CLTS adversely.
- Take senior government officials to the field to see the results of CLTS and if possible to witness a triggering.

- If there is a sanitation policy: review it to include a demand-driven unsubsidized approach. If there is no such policy, advocate for its development and acceptance.
- Seek to establish a national platform such as a Government chaired Task Force for CLTS, with donor and NGO representatives as appropriate.
- Promote regular coordination meetings with all the major players in sanitation.
- Identify and work with champions and allies.
- Point out that CLTS is an entry point for other community-led activities such as solid waste management and health issues.

### ***Traps to avoid***

- Imposing a standardized model latrine.
- Making damaging compromises with other approaches.

## **Urban Applications**

### ***What works***

- Keep up to date with developments in Mauritania (notably Rosso, a small town) and other African examples like in Kenya (Mathare and Kibera – informal settlements) on the [www.communityledtotal.com](http://www.communityledtotal.com) sanitation website.

### ***Traps to avoid***

- Supposing that CLTS cannot be applied in urban settings.
- Expecting urban CLTS to be the same as rural. Empowerment and political lobbying are involved for tackling the many issues involved.

## **Documentation and Networking**

### ***What works***

- Translate key documents in as many languages as possible.
- Regular e.g. quarterly national newsletters as in Sierra Leone, Ethiopia and Malawi, which have value both locally and for the worldwide CLTS community.
- Short contributions of experience such as one-pagers shared on the website.

- Bringing practitioners together making time for documentation, as was the basis for the issue of Participatory Learning and Action 'Tales of Shit: CLTS in Africa'.
- Using video, television, radio and the press for recording and publicizing CLTS.
- Blogging as events unfold.
- Collaborating and sharing and pooling resources for the production and dissemination of materials.
- Contributing materials to the CLTS website where they are widely accessible and can be featured in the bi-monthly CLTS newsletter.
- Honestly documenting shortcomings.
- Face-to-face meetings and workshops across countries and organizations, nationally and internationally.
- Learning exchange visits and study tours.
- Inviting trainers from other countries.

### ***Traps to avoid***

- Organizations working in isolation from each other.
- Inflated statistics in top-down target-oriented programmes.

### **Conclusion**

The points above are part of an on-going process of learning. They are listed here as being indicative rather than definitive or set in stone. The hope is that they will be useful for policy-makers and practitioners and will contribute to the accelerated spread of CLTS with quality, to the benefit of many millions living in rural areas in francophone Africa, in other African countries, and globally. Each participant commits herself to promote this document at all levels, on all occasions.

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