Salima District Council starts to enjoy the Benefits of the WatSan M&E Database

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Introduction
The Ministries of Health and Water Development are piloting a Water and Sanitation M&E system in four districts (Lilongwe, Blantyre, Mzimba, Salima). The pilot enables districts to determine which CLTS and sanitation data needs to be collected for effective and efficient district level decision making, planning, and M&E. It aims to determine useful monitoring and evaluation indicators and increase district capacity for decision making on CLTS and sanitation initiatives overall. In addition to enhanced management skills, the database generated can be used by other programme managers as a source of information.

Experiences related to the development and use of the database
Development of the database is simple. It is just a simple Excel spreadsheet where tables are made depending on the indicators to be collected. It involves proper planning to ensure data collectors know what data to collect so that data quality is ensured. Papers are needed for printing of the forms for data collection. This data management system has already started showing some of its benefits.

Salima once used the data, especially for the Name of HSAs, TA, GVH, Village and Health facilities when we were planning for Indoor Residual Spraying (IRS). It also eased the work of the District Environmental Health Office when information was requested by a student who was pursuing a Master’s degree at College of Medicine. The student was looking for information regarding details of villages in a specific Health facility where he wanted to conduct his research. ‘We were appreciated by Dr. Kalua for the availability of data that we could give him on a very short notice when he requested for it’ said Mr. Alphone Ganizani (DEHO). Dr. Kalua was looking for baseline information on TAs, GVHs, Villages, households and Extension workers in the areas where he wanted to conduct a survey on Trachoma in Salima.
S.H.I.T.S. Sharing Highlights In Total Sanitation (maLawi)

Community Empowerment Leads Total Sanitation

It is well known that follow-ups are the backbone of successful CLTS implementation. In many districts, these follow-ups are primarily conducted by the district Health Surveillance Assistants (HSAs). In Phalombe, the InterAide and Engineers Without Borders Consortium is trying an innovative approach to the CLTS monitoring process by heavily involving community members to take on responsibilities to mobilize their community towards their ODF goal.

In Phalombe District, 48 out of the 72 villages have been triggered. Despite the HSAs agreement to follow-up once every fortnight in their respective villages, there have been some challenges in making sure follow-ups occur regularly. It was during several field inspection visits with one HSA, Justice Chisoni, where it became apparent that the progress in the village was not only ongoing successfully, but completely supported by the community. Achieving total sanitation was indeed community-led!

Despite minimal follow-up support from HSAs in certain villages, Chisoni and the field officers observed that the community members were empowered and triggered to take ownership of their health profile. Chisoni found that the behavior change approach of CLTS had provided the community members with the component in the form of “ignition” which previous HSA health talks did not touch upon. This had a lot to do with the capacity the community members gained from the CLTS program.


**What?** Community Follow-up Workshops. These workshops allowed community members to discuss their action plans, define their roles in the follow-up process, understand how their responsibilities fit into the community plan, and share strategies with members of other triggered villages to refine their monitoring approach.

**Who?** The program in Phalombe provided the community members from each triggered village with a capacity building component through the follow-up workshops with their responsible HSA.

**Where?** Members of six newly triggered communities were brought to a venue to share and learn.

**When?** As the next step after being triggered and an action plan is developed, community members are invited to attend the follow-up workshop.

**How?** With CLTS, community members and HSAs have been given the capacity to follow-up. Community members are stepping up and fulfilling the role of CLTS Monitors.

The sense of empowerment was clear for Chisoni. With the support of the Village Headman, natural leaders supported their communities to take charge of sensitizing, teaching, and supervising the progression of CLTS in their villages.

During the field visit exercise, Chisoni observed that several villages that were newly triggered within the last couple of months were ODF. It seemed the village headmen and natural leaders were sharing information about the actions of their villages to other villages, which inserted the idea of improved sanitation and the use of drop-hole covers or hand-washing facilities to members of those communities even before their villages were triggered. Soon after being triggered, these members take the goal of becoming ODF very seriously. In one village, the chief had even told a story about taking the opportunity at a funeral to share the CLTS progress with his community!

It seemed that the community follow-up workshops acted as a platform for community members to discuss challenges they might confront, the opportunities or avenues they could use to share their knowledge, and the responsibilities they could define for themselves during the monitoring process. It appeared that villages triggered later on in the program were more instrumental at achieving ODF status through the observation of role modeling from surrounding villages compared to the first villages to be triggered early on in the program.

Chisoni learned that for these community members to take hold of their health and use sanitary facilities, they need to be empowered. The power to organize, mobilize, sensitize and take action comes within the community. The follow-up workshop activity had been key in encouraging this empowerment, because of the development of role definitions, gaining support from other members and HSAs, and the opportunity to create community-based action plans which were analyzed by the community members themselves and sometimes required revision.

Chisoni also learned that community role modeling to other villages has played a big part in achieving rapid ODF status. During the follow-up workshop, one of the elements that the villages are using is to conduct learning visits to triggered villages and see what others are doing. During one of the last follow-up workshops at a funeral, the natural leaders and village headmen proposed going for exchange visits to other triggered villages to learn from other strategies to achieving ODF state.

District HSAs are key players for CLTS follow-up but let us not forget that the CLTS concept should be community-led. Hence, it is crucial that the community members themselves are the ones driving their own progress with HSA support. Without community support in CLTS, sustainability cannot be achieved.

A community follow-up workshop in Phalombe where Natural Leaders and other community members including the Village Headman (chief) create a plan and role definitions for following up on their triggered villages.

Behaviour change was apparent. Latrines, drop-hole covers and hand-washing facilities were being used. Several of the hand-washing facilities had soap or containers of ash beside them. Chisoni and the implementation team observed several members using the facilities during the visit.

Field observations gave evidence of a mind-set shift but these needs to be sustained through collaboration of all community members. This potentially indicates the need for incorporating behavior change components during HSA health talks at the village level. Chisoni and other HSAs have discovered improved sanitation and hygiene habits after the coming of CLTS – this can be continued by encouraging the role modeling of leaders exhibiting these good practices and through encouragement of enforced by-laws by the village headmen.

Further, it was discovered that some newly triggered villages had been sensitized about adopting safer sanitation and hygiene practices through the role modeling of neighbouring villages. Once these villages were triggered themselves, the improvement in sanitation overage increased drastically and more rapidly than the first triggered villages in the area. These changes were observed through comparisons of the sanitation data from the triggering against the district’s baseline. It goes to show that word of mouth, role modeling and simple observation and learning can act as a strong influence for community mobilization.
Adapting CLTS Techniques to Increase Community Payment for Water Point Repairs

By Lisa Boyd, African Programs Staff, EWB Canada, Mangochi

The Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) approach has proven to be an effective way to incite community level ownership and action against poor sanitation practices; however, the techniques and tools that lead to success in CLTS are not exclusive to sanitation. A team of field workers from the Mangochi District Water Office and Engineers Without Borders (EWB) Canada are showing, through the recently developed Water Investment Triggering (WIT) Approach, that it is possible to apply these techniques in new ways in order to encourage community payment for waterpoint maintenance and repairs in Malawi (primarily for boreholes and protected shallow wells with Afridev hand pumps).

There are two primary techniques utilized in the CLTS process which regularly result in community action: (1) the incitement of communal shame, fear and disgust, and (2) the facilitator’s method of asking questions in order to bring about discussions and debates within the community, rather than directly teaching them “what they should be doing.”

Almost two years ago, the Mzimba District Water Office partnered with EWB to develop a community development approach that used these two techniques to change behavior around water handling practices. That approach has since been modified over the past five months in Mangochi District in order to develop the WIT Approach – a process which specifically advocates for communities to increase financial investments in their waterpoints.

While hand-washing and other water handling practices are often discussed by Health Surveillance Assistants and Village Health Committees in Malawi, issues surrounding funding for waterpoint maintenance and repairs are less discussed and supported. Despite a general recognition that lack of community willingness to pay for pump maintenance and repairs is a significant issue that contributes to low functionality rates, district water offices do not always have the tools they need to address this issue effectively. Therefore, there is a need to support district water offices in developing creative approaches, such as WIT, that effectively address this issue without relying on external funding.

The WIT Approach has now been tested and improved through trials by Water Monitoring Assistants (WMAs) in seven villages in Mangochi District. The facilitation process follows a similar pattern to CLTS, having four major sections: community mapping, transect walk and demonstrations, behavior change discussions and cost calculations, and formulation of an action plan. The mapping and transect walk in WIT focus on identifying both protected and unprotected water sources, and then visiting those. Then, while at an unprotected source, demonstrations are conducted to trigger community-wide disgust and shame against the alternative, unprotected water sources in the village.

As observed by one Water Monitoring Assistant (WMA) familiar with CLTS, this process seems to catch the excitement and interest of community members, thereby promoting discussion and action; however, it does so without disguising them to the point where they will refuse to participate in the program, as occurs sometimes during CLTS.

Follow-ups in three villages showed that all of them had created/revamped Water Point Committees and had begun collecting money since the triggering. In addition, the one village with not enough waterpoints to cover the population had put in a formal application through the Village Development Committee, which is the proper district process for requesting new boreholes. Further monitoring will need to occur, but initial signs suggest the approach can successfully trigger community discussions about clean drinking water and incite in the villagers a need to maintain their safe water sources. The Mangochi District Water Office therefore intends to use WIT during borehole follow-up visits and/or monitoring of borehole functionality as a tool to target specific village-level behaviors that are missing (i.e. community willingness to fundraise for borehole spare parts/repairs). Because WIT, similar to CLTS, requires little to no resources beyond the fuel needed to travel to communities, it can therefore fit into the Water Office’s regular tasks and increase the effectiveness of their follow-up work with minimal added time/resources.

The Water Investment Triggering Process is one example of how district level actors have turned critical insights and knowledge about community level issues into creative approaches to address those specific issues in a way that fits district water office resources. Through WIT, we see that (a) it is possible to increase a community’s willing to pay for waterpoint repairs/maintenance, thereby improving waterpoint functionality across Malawi, and (b) that such an approach can be developed by district officers and designed to fit within their regular district resources.

As district level officers: what do you see as the major community level issues leading to lack of community payment for waterpoint repairs, and how do you feel that your office could better address these issues? As development partners or national level officers: how do you feel about supporting and encouraging this type of work within district offices?

We would love to hear your feedback on these ideas – please email any thoughts/ responses to Lisa Boyd (EWB Canada – lisaboyd@ewb.ca) and Hassan Maluwa (WMA – hassanmaluwa@gmail.com). Or, you can flash or text Lisa at +265991833757 and she will call you back to discuss your thoughts. Thanks!

PRODUCTIVE SCHOOL SANITATION

An exciting development is taking place in Mzimba North District and Mzuzu. The District Education Offices are rolling out the School Health and Nutrition (SHN) Policy, which aims to have school aged children “enjoying good health and eating balanced, nutritious diets”. Sanitation is a key component of SHN, one aspect of which involves linking ecosan toilets to school gardens and orchards. Only 3 weeks after the training in schools took place and significant changes are already being seen in the demonstration schools.

At the CCAP Primary School in Ekwendeni (Mzimba North), the school gardens and orchards are on their way to being established. Below, Mr. Chihana (Headmaster, centre), Mrs. Trab (teacher, right) and Mr. Chima (Mzimba North EHO, WES, left), proudly show us their grounds. Banana trees have been planted, as well as beans and sweet potato, among others. Mushrooms have already started growing in the gardens! Let’s congratulate CCAP Primary School and the other schools in Mzuzu and Mzimba North District for their quick progress!
In Malawi, EWB collaborates with government, donor and NGO partners to enhance the sustained adoption of sanitation and hygiene behaviours. Currently EWB’s focus involves providing technical assistance to the Malawi sanitation & hygiene sub-sector for local government “Community Led Total Sanitation” programmes. Jolly Ann Maulit and Tessa Roselli from EWB are collaborating with District Coordinating Teams from 14 Unicef-supported WASH Districts in Malawi on their CLTS programmes: Chitipa, Nkhata Bay, Likoma Island, Mzimba, Kasungu, Dowa, Salima, Mchinji, Lilongwe, Mwanza, Mangochi, Blantyre, Chiradzulu, and Karonga, as well as Phalombe District through the Global Sanitation Fund (GSF). They are facilitating learning exchange between all CLTS stakeholders in Malawi, developing monitoring & evaluation tools, coaching district CLTS leaders to help them refine their unique CLTS 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 NGOs working in the water, sanitation and Hygiene subsector in Malawi. It recognizes the role of Water and Sanitation in economic development and poverty reduction. WES Network’s head office is in Lilongwe with representation across the country by its member organizations. To date the WES Network has a membership of over 50 local and international NGOs across 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.

S.H.I.T.S. NEWSLETTER

This newsletter, coordinated by EWB & WES-NETWORK, reviews learning and experiences of Malawi local government CLTS implementation and their collaborating NGO partners. It includes many contributions from district and central-level leaders within the sanitation & hygiene sub-sector.

OD WALKING AWAY FROM THOM VILLAGE IN KASUNGU PU

By: Danny Gondwe, Plan Malawi, Kasungu (dangogondwe@yahoo.com)

Thom is one of the villages with low pit latrine coverage in Kasungu PU. The village has 38 households with a total population of 152 people. There are 14 households in possession of pit latrines and 24 households defecate in the open bush. The village was triggered on 20th October, 2011 and those present were 145 in total i.e. 85 adults and 60 children and they all took active participation in all the processes i.e. Community Mapping; Walk of Shame; Shit and Water Demonstration; Shit Calculation; Medical Costs; Action Plan Developing.

After going through Walk of Shame, Shit and Water Demonstration, Shit Calculation and Medical Costs Thom Village was totally disguised, ashamed and fearful. They confessed that most of the people in this village have always suffered from diarrhea and dysentery but did not know the cause. “Now I know we eat each others shit in this village and hence our friendship with diarrhea and dysentery.”, remarked Jabulani Chirwa, one of the elders in Thom Village.

The village members quickly formed a Taskforce Team, developed a TOR (Terms of Reference) and a plan of action that indicates the ODF date of Thom Village as 30th November, 2011. The Youth Group has promised to construct pit latrines for the elderly, physically challenged and chronically ill people. The Children Organization has agreed to strategize the ODF by singing a song entitled “Wakunya kuthengere, Walije Chimbuzi” (He/She defecates in the bush; He/She does not have a pit latrine). The song will be sung in the morning, midday and evening in the face of those households that do not have pit latrines. At the same time those found defecating in the bush they will be shot by slingshots and escorted with a convoy of children to his/her house while singing.

It was interesting to note that some of the village members started digging the pit latrines on the spot before the meeting came to an end. “I know better the children of this village, they live by what they say, I better dig my pit latrine before it is too late for tears.” Commented Amos Ngoyi, one of the villagers in Thom Village.

Do you have a similar story about a village becoming ODF in your district? If yes, please don’t hesitate to share it with us by emailing jollyannmaulit@ewb.ca. We’d be happy to publish it in our next newsletter!