Please, don’t shit in the bush as you pass our village

Reported On By: Edgar T. Phiri, Mwanza District Water Officer

“Away with any passerby that open defecates in our village!” Those were the shouts from seemingly angry people of M’pima Village, Tradition Authority Nthache, in Mwanza District. It was a good afternoon when a group of health and development extension staff from Mwanza District went for triggering, as part of their hands-on CLTS training.

When they arrived at M’pima, they found that the village already had good sanitation coverage at 90%. Yet, at the time of triggering members of the village still described the occurrence of diarrhoea. Shit was a common sight in bushes along the road that passed by this village.

Superbly triggered as the community became that day, much bitterness surfaced after they realised that they were eating shit despite almost everyone having and using toilets in M’pima. All this bitterness was directed to the people who pass the village on their way to Mwanza Boma (main trading centre in Mwaaza District).

One natural leader was quoted as saying, “Mudzi wathu uno ngwa ukhondo zedi alangizi, koma vuto lomwe tiri nalo ndi anthu odutsa popita ku midzi ina kapena ku Boma chifukwa amanyera m’chire!” Meaning that most people in this village are of better integrity because they have and use latrines, but passersby are mostly to blame for defecating in the bush.

After people had expressed their anger it was time for the village headman to comment on the subject matter. In his remarks he said he was so concerned with the malpractice; however he was not in agreement with an idea of beating people found shitting in the bushes. He said that the best way is to build a latrine at the point where the practice is most common, and label clearly: THIS TOILET IS FOR VISITORS. PLEASE DO NOT SHIT IN THE BUSH.

Introducing Jolly Ann: new EWB staff for CLTS

JOLLY ANN MAULIT
0993 991 728
jollyannmaulit@ewb.ca

Dear District Leaders,

I would like to introduce myself as the incoming CLTS district support staff from Engineers Without Borders Canada. As of June 2010 I will transition into the role that Ashley Raeside has played since March 2009, coaching and supporting Malawi CLTS leaders.

From now until June, I will work intensively with the Mchinji DCT in order to learn more about supporting local government CLTS implementation.

I am very excited to meet all of you soon and most importantly, to learn from you and gather your ideas on:
- how ODF villages can be created on a larger scale,
- what it takes to be a good leader, and
- how EWB can further support you in the future!

Please contact me at any time if you have thoughts on any of the above, or even just to introduce yourself. I would be more than happy to hear from you!

Zikomo Kwambiri!

Jolly Ann Maulit
ENGINEERS WITHOUT BORDERS
Utter change of people’s attitudes is key to sustaining ODF status in triggered villages. Simply put, an attitude is a person’s outlook on what is ‘normal’; how life ought to be. Changing attitudes is not easy to achieve, but it is possible. Once people have developed a positive perception of latrine use and a negative perception of open defecation on the other hand, open defecation practice can become ancient history.

Attitudes are very important traits that directly influence people’s behaviour. One can think of different possible ways of changing attitudes. But, regular exposure to desired practices until they become embedded in one’s usual repertoire is one of the most ideal ways.

For example, a person who used to defecate in the bush, and now uses a latrine has changed their behaviour. But a person who continues using a latrine over a long time might gradually adopt a permanent notion that using a latrine is the only acceptable way to dispose of faeces. In this way, the attitude is also changed, and therefore the person is much more likely to sustain the initial behaviour change.

Usually, the attitudes of adults are more difficult to alter than children’s, particularly children from 5–14 years old. The attitudes of children are supple when compared with those of adults because in this age group they are still tender and more flexible to change.

CLTS facilitators can therefore capitalize on this advantage and put special focus on children of this age group. Although CLTS bears an element of focusing on children, it is less than the focus on adults is. For some CLTS practitioners, not much is done with the children other than just keeping them away to avoid distracting facilitation among adults. But children are vitally essential targets to realize a significant change in community attitudes towards open defecation. Regular exposure of children to latrine use has a high likelihood of getting them used to the practice, and as they grow up it becomes their normal way of perceiving life, i.e. attitude changed. If bold enough, the children might even lobby their parents to build a latrine for the family’s use after triggering.

When the children grow into adults with desired practices (i.e. latrine use), the community will be changed for good. Even generations to come will not have problems with latrine use as they will be growing up while it is already the norm.

**CAUTION:**

The suggestion of this article to focus on children is not the only way to secure sustainability of ODF communities. Sometimes children use adults as role models. It is difficult to change the way children perceive life if adults in the same community have a conflicting perspective. It is therefore strongly recommended to trigger the whole community (both adults and children). But most important of all, CLTS facilitators ought to be as innovative and dedicated as possible in using ways that can go beyond stimulating the temporary behaviour change that occurs when people are triggered to construct and use latrines. CLTS facilitators must also foster real change in the community’s attitudes towards open defecation to ensure and secure social sustainability of ODF status in triggered villages.
Clatter! Clatter!
A Poem By: Tamala Zembeni, Blantyre DWO

Clatter! Clatter! Tin lids sound
Is your latrine covered? The natural leader asks
No lids are there, communities respond
Little do they know
The HSA has everything worked out

Clatter! Clatter! Old iron sheets noisy they become
Cover your latrines! Cover them! Children shout
Effective ODF depends on this
This they do to show
How much of change agents they are

Clatter! Clatter! Steel plates cry
Covering latrines is what we will do, communities claim
Oops drop hole covers are here
Then headmen call
For collective response

Nggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggg! The phone calls
ODF! ODF! ODF is my village! Excited the HSA exclaims
Come DCT and all
This will let you go
Satisfied CLTS is nothing but a BOMB

A Famine for Flies
Reported By: W.A. Katundu, Headteacher, T/A Mkanda, Mchinji District

Flies at Mkanda have complained bitterly on the positive behaviour portrayed by communities in accepting and adopting sanitary behaviour change through CLTs approach.

They have complained that the area has been hit by acute food shortage due to use of toilets and drop hole covered which cover toilet holes completely hindering them from accessing food.

At their joint meeting with their counterparts; the dogs, cockroaches and pigs who also shared the same sentiments, unanimously agreed to seek for a court injunction to strain communities from adopting CLTs approach.

In a separate interview, the dogs threatened to stop guarding if the behaviour continues.

COACHING TIP: How can feedback be a useful tool for CLTS managers?

Being an effective CLTS facilitator is an art that can take practice to master. This is especially true for some who may not be “naturals” at CLTS facilitation. As a CLTS manager, it is your responsibility to cultivate a successful team of CLTS facilitators with the appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes. But you might be asking yourself, how can I help my teams members perform better as facilitators? This article explores one tool you can use to help boost the effectiveness of the CLTS facilitators you supervise: Providing Feedback.

The chart below is adapted from the book “The Tao of Coaching” by Max Landsberg. It uses the language of how a “coach” (i.e. a CLTS manager) can provide useful feedback to a “coachee” (i.e. extension staff or other CLTS facilitators you supervise).

Consider: how often do you provide useful feedback to your extension staff, colleagues or superiors? How often do you request feedback from your extension staff, colleagues, and superiors? Do you believe your team’s feedback habit is sufficient?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BAD FEEDBACK</th>
<th>GOOD FEEDBACK</th>
<th>KEY INGREDIENTS OF GOOD FEEDBACK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Creates defensiveness and confrontation; focuses on the blame | Creates trust and cooperation; focuses on improvements, possible or achieved | • Ask the coachee if you can offer the feedback  
• Be sensitive to the coachee’s feelings |
| Does not improve knowledge, skills or attitudes | Improves knowledge, skills or attitudes | • Focus on the skills, not the person  
• Paint a specific picture of the desired skill or attitude  
• Suggest practical steps the coachee can take |
| Undermines confidence and self-esteem | Improves confidence in one’s ability and potential | • Position the feedback as a need to “build” or “demonstrate”, versus “you don’t have” or “you must prove”  
• Balance the negative and the positives. Try to say something nice, and always turn negative comments into constructive criticism. |
| Leaves the person guessing | Clarifies so the coachee knows “exactly where they stand” and “what to do next” | • Use concrete examples from your observations of the coachee  
• Verify with questions; ask the coachee, “how they view the situation?” Ask them to summarise how they viewed the feedback at the end of the discussion so that you are sure they understood what you were saying.  
• Jointly arrive at a plan of action; don’t dictate to them what’s next |
| Leaves the person feeling “judged” | Leaves the person feeling “helped” | • Invite the coachee to assess their own performance first  
• Offer support for the future; ask how you can help |
EWB’S WORK on SANITATION & HYGIENE

In Malawi and Zambia, 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. Ashley Raeside and Jolly Ann Maulit from EWB are collaborating with District Coordinating Teams from 12 UNICEF-supported WASH Districts in Malawi on their CLTS programmes: Chitipa, Nkhata Bay, Likoma Island, Mzimba, Kasungu, Dowa, Salima, Mchinji, Lilongwe, Mwanza, Mangochi, and Blantyre. They are facilitating learning exchange between all CLTS stakeholders in Malawi, developing monitoring & evaluation tools, and coaching district CLTS leaders to help them refine their unique CLTS programmes for maximum community impact.

S.H.i.T.S. NEWSLETTER

This newsletter, coordinated by EWB, 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.

“Moving Together” with CLTS

Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) has been adopted and put in practice in Malawi since 2008, when the first group of extension workers were trained and they triggered the first 15 communities in Salima District. Since then, a good number more extension workers have been trained and hundreds of villages have been triggered and certified ODF across the 12 UNICEF-supported districts.

“HAVE WE MOVED TOGETHER WITH THE COMMUNITY?”

After triggering, there has been a tendency by extension workers to just supervise or inspect the communities/villages and assess whether they are making progress in latrine construction and use at household level or not. We identify whether the latrine coverage is going towards 100%, as we calculate;

\[
\text{Total # of households with latrines} \times 100
\]

Total # of households

But CLTS goes beyond just having the latrine at household level. It embarks on ending open defecation and sometimes even clearing or converting the open defecation areas such as bushes to obtain Open Defecation Free status (all faeces to be deposited in a latrine of a particular household’s choice that they can afford to build, use and keep hygienically clean).

Since the CLTS concept deals with behavior change, to reach and attain the ODF status, the community needs to move step by step through, till they completely change their behavior positively and enjoy direct and indirect benefits. But one unanswered question is:

“Do us extension workers also move together step by step with the community/village that we trigger until it attains ODF status?”

We trigger a good number of communities, but only a handful of them attain ODF status. Have we at any point gone back to our drawing tables to evaluate ourselves? Some reasons for our failures might be:

- Poor facilitation skills
- Inadequate supervision skills (we do not know what to look for when supervising or what type of supervision to use and what records to keep)
- Unable to analyze our triggered communities and together come up with problems/challenges and solutions.
- Poor choice of natural leaders
- We do not know at which step are we and what is the next step
- We do not get triggered ourselves first before we trigger the community
- Failure of community members to support the concept or support each other to attain ODF
- Weak leadership

The list is endless, but for now let’s stop here.

Hence with the above reasons, it is important that extension workers should be the first ones to be triggered before they trigger the community and then we should make sure we move together with the triggered community step by step till we attain ODF status.

NOTE: comments are welcome and expected in the next write up of S.H.i.T.S!

Written By: Paul Chunga, Salima DEHO
p4chunga@yahoo.com | 0999 793 186

Written By: Paul Chunga, Salima DEHO
p4chunga@yahoo.com | 0999 793 186