Rural sanitation and CLTS monitoring and evaluation: Experiences of post-certification monitoring in West and Central Africa

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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 will be 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 through breaks and meals. 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The notes produced are not meant to be polished or exhaustive, and they are not peer reviewed.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. <u>As such, they are not for citation</u>.

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 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. Introduction

The ultimate goal of CLTS is to end open defecation (OD) and sustain an open defecation free (ODF) status. Maintaining ODF status and moving up the sanitation ladder is closely linked to the sustainability of interventions. While the monitoring and evaluation during the process of CLTS until certification is well-defined for all countries, the monitoring and evaluation of the maintaining of ODF status is a major problem and is central to the sustainabilityof achievements in rural sanitation. This note is a summary review of the constraints and challenges, existing or potential solutions and emerging issues in relation to post-certification monitoring.

It is based on the sharing of experiences from West and Central African countries participating in the workshop mentioned above. Although it is limited in terms, it can serve as a basis for a detailed study contributing to the understanding of the thematics for sustainability of CLTS specifically and of rural sanitation in general.

2. Problems/ Challenges

The main problem of post-certification monitoring takes us back to the monitoring of the intervention's sustainability which, in turn, takes us back to the efficacy of interventions. Post-certification monitoring is necessary to be sure of the countries' real progress in order to ensure that signs of regression do not go unaddressed.

The following challenges emerge as the most pertinent:

- Weak monitoring and evaluation system or mechanism: evaluation criteria; standards at the country level and CLTS criteria; coordination difficulties for the effective aggregation of data.
- Methods and criteria for post-certification monitoring varied between the different actors within the same country: criteria of return to OD may vary from one actor to another.
- Capacity (human and financial resources): for sustainable monitoring at the grass roots level and decentralised technical services and for scaling up: this goes beyond the real capacity of technical services, which have the obligation to ensure the same accountability for several sectors.
- Project approach (project-based monitoring and evaluation): the end of project implementation brings to an end the monitoring andevaluation process. The available funding often doesn't take into account post-intervention monitoring.
- Few experiences of post-ODF monitoring: documentation of the monitoring and evaluation of post-certification experiences are somewhat limited.

3. Country experiences

Post-certification strategy in Mali

In Mali, the post-ODF strategy has been prepared by the National Directorate of Sanitation, with the involvement of all CLTS actors. This strategy is built around the following five major strategic axes:

- <u>Strategic priority n° 1:</u> Choose to anticipate and act early to create and the consolidate sustainable endogenous dynamics.
- <u>Strategic priority n° 2:</u> Strengthen community dynamics through the promotion of innovative additional initiatives in order to improve community commitment and their visibility after certification.
- <u>Strategic priority n° 3:</u> Consolidate information management mechanisms for certified villages.
- <u>Strategic priority n° 4:</u> Strengthen local financing for the post-certification phase.
- <u>Strategic priority n° 5:</u> Improve communication about the social and health impacts of CLTS in order to mobilise resources for the post-certification phase.

Among the priorities contributing to the guarantee of the sustainability of interventions, priority n° 1 takes into account monitoring and evaluation through the following points (extract from Post-ODF strategy in Mali – National Directorate of Sanitation – July 2014):

- Support the village committee for sanitation in the improvement of its monitoring activities;
- Conduct external missions to monitor the time taken for community knowledge and capacity strengthening;
- Make an inventory of local know-how and train masons during the active phase;
- Support the community in developing a plan for maintaining ODF status.

a. Support the village sanitation committee in the improvement of its monitoring activities

The village sanitation committee is the linchpin for the implementation of the community action plan. Through its activities to monitor the community's commitments and raise awareness of the adoption and maintaining of good health practices, the committee actively contributes to reaching and maintaining ODF status.

In order to effectively monitor at the households level, a fixed number of households can be assigned to each member of the committee, who will then be responsible for them. Committee meetings thus will serve as a framework to take stock of the follow-up carried out by each member, identify successes and challenges and propose appropriate solutions.

Furthermore, committee members should have **up-to-date knowledge on the number of inhabitants in each**

household and in the whole village through the use of simple statistics on the village as soon as the committee is established through the regular updating of data from each household.

To be more effective, the committee needs to strengthen its capacity from the outset within the framework of CLTS, and also through the use of **simple monitoring and awareness-raising tools throughout the external support.** These tools could include an image box or a flip book for awareness-raising activities, or **a follow-up notebook and a visitors' book**.

External support will be carried out so that the use of these tools becomes habitual and will last, even at the end of contractual commitment of the implementing NGOs'.

b. Carry out external missions to monitor the time allocated for knowledge and capacity strengthening of the community

Monitoring missions carried out by implementating NGOs' facilitators should not be exclusively limited to visiting a few households and the overall environment of the village followed by discussions with committee members and with the village leader and the elite. They should also be opportunities for discussions as well as to strengthen people's knowledge and capacity in various different development themes, particularly to issues relating to water, hygiene and sanitation.

Depending on the situation, the facilitator of the implementing NGO may proceed with focus groups or with village assemblies ensuring that there is a gradual transfer of skills to the members of the village monitoring committee.

c. Make an inventory of local know-how and train masons during the active phase

The training of masons contributes to the development of local expertise regarding the promotion of local know-how and materials as well as to the production and the laying of SanPlat slabs and gradually for the construction of a household latrine.

The DNACPN (National Pollution and Nuisance Control Office) and its partners will make a documented inventory of know-how and promotion of local materials for the construction and the upkeep of latrines, as well as for the construction of sumps. On this basis, masons will be trained to master this skill and the use of local materials. In addition, they will also be trained in the manufacture and laying of SanPlat slabs.

d. Support the community in equipping itself with a plan to maintain its ODF status

After the certification ceremony, external support drastically decreases, leaving village communities with limited visibility on the steps to be taken in order to maintain ODF status and all good practices gained. To remedy this situation, it is therefore necessary to support the community in adopting itself with **a plan to maintain ODF status before certification.**

The importance of a retention plan is also justified by the fact that a certification made just after the evaluation of the level of achievement of ODF status can turn out to be premature at the beginnning of the actual upholding of good sanitary practices.

During a reasonable period of time of one to three months before certifying the village, the implementation of a retention plan will limit the risks of regression in the maintaining of good practices as well as the decrease in community dynamics.

Based on the positive results of the evaluation of the degree of achievement of ODF status and before the certification ceremony, the implementing NGO's facilitator will support the community in developing a plan to sustain its ODF status taking into account the community action plan it has just implemented and also its "dream" in terms of water, hygiene and sanitation. This sustainability plan will define the community vision for the coming year and will also act as a communication, awareness-raising and mobilisation tool for the community during the certification ceremony.

Community self-evaluation: "Healthy households survey" approach in Mauritania

This approach is implemented with the aim of leading to the development of a post-ODF strategy at the national level. Here the emphasis is on motivation and monitoring by peer households, which allows them to contribute to a sustainable entrenchment of good practices in relation to sanitation, hygiene and water security. The focus on communities emerged as an appropriate solution because the centralised monitoring (through the regional committee) is expensive. The process includes the following approaches:

- Identification of criteria (attributes) of a healthy household: in addition to criteria linked to sanitation, these criteria include aspects relating to water, hygiene and sanitation.

- Evaluation of the community status vis-a-vis the final list of criteria: The principle of the evaluation is the secret ballot. After visiting households, self-evaluation group members (women) use the secret ballot method in order to check the situation against the hygiene status of each household visited. In order to establish the group's average, totals are calculated and divided by the number of members present. Evaluations are also carried out on the hygiene within households.

- Sharing of results of the Healthy Household Survey: The Healthy Household Survey's results are discussed among the group of households. Then, the results of the village as a whole will be discussed during a meeting at the community level after the training.

- Definition of the targets to be reached: Based on the Healthy Household Survey and the discussions that follow, the community will decide on its targets for improving the WASH , health and hygiene conditions of the village.

- Successful implementation of interventions: Based on the improvement targets for WASH, health and hygiene conditions for the village, the group of members (women) decides which activities should be undertaken to achieve these goals. Activities may include:
  - The need for sessions/meetings based on the hygiene promotion, their frequency, their timing and their location.
  - Discussions about the opportunity and determination of the number, of the frequency and of the strategy of diverse games and other contests, such as "healthy babies shows", "visiting model households", "household rewards s and/or community champions".
  - Determine the strategy of involving children, young girls and boys to act as agents of change for hygiene promotion.
  - Decide the frequency of the Healthy Household Survey.

- Community-led monitoring
  - Healthy household Surveys will be carried out periodically, at least once a month.
  - While discussing the survey's results, the community compares current results with previous ones.
  - The community can also the review criteria and adjust them if needed (integration of other dimensions of criteria: health, protection, education, etc.).

Other experiences in West and Central Africa countries

Country	Experiences of post-ODF monitoring-evaluation or practices promoting post-certification monitoring and evaluation
Benin	No national post-ODF strategy is in place. However, GSF's programme foresees the strategy development. For a start, experience of using "strong bases" helps to strengthen capacity of groups that will take charge of the post-ODF monitoring. "War room's" used in the CLTS process could potentially be useful for post-certification monitoring
Burkina-Faso	No post-ODF strategy - the emphasis is put on the capacity strengthening of technical services so that they can be in a position to take over. Advocacy is also carried out with municipalities to provide a budget for takeover.
Cameroon	Post-ODF management is taken into account in the national CLTS guide, which anticipates community and municipality action plans for taking over after the departure of NGOs/support partners.
Ivory Coast	CLTS national strategy includes a section on post-ODF status. Thus, each year an evaluation of ODF villages is planned (based on a determined sample).
The Gambia	The Gambia displays an OD rate of only 0.6%. Focus is put on the "last mile", with the support of community solidarity. Reflections for maintaining ODF status and post-certification monitoring are currently ongoing.
Liberia	High rate of return to OD status in the country (up to 40%). A strategy of post-certification monitoring is essential. However there is already a need for coordination for the harmonious use of the CLTS national guide.
Mali	Existence of a post-ODF monitoring strategy adopted at the national level. The strategy includes a package of activities, which must be implemented immediately after certification. The implementation still remains dependent on funding from financial partners. CARE has developed a community engagement protocol for the sustainability of ODF status with a monitoring grid.
Mauritania	Communities' self-evaluation through the HealthyHouseholds Surveys. The National post-certification strategy will be based on this approach.
Niger	Experience of post-ODF monitoring with the USAID project, which focuses on the monitoring of maintenance of ODF status indicators. Tools exist for the promotion of sustainability as well as for post-ODF monitoring (annual survey).
Nigeria	No post-ODF strategy, but setting up of a system of competition between communities to maintain ODF status. WASHCOM (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Committee) is also used for post-ODF monitoring.
DRC	The principle of unfolding approach includes the taking into account of post-ODF management, which foresees a stabilisation period which can last up to 2 years. An evaluation of "evidence of sustainability" is established. Water management associations have an obligation to support hygiene and sanitation activities.
Senegal	The National Strategy for Rural Sanitation (SNAR, for "Stratégie Nationale de l'Assainissement Rural") puts the focus on self-supply through the promotion of sanitation marketing and of micro-finance.
Sierra Leone	In this case, post-ODF relies mostly on the promotion of compliance with the laws and regulations put in place. Municipalities are responsible for ensuring post-ODF monitoring.
Chad	The implementation approach includes 3 phases: (i) CLTS in order to reach ODF status; (ii) post-ODF management so as to reach "Sanitised village" status and (iii) the stabilisation phase.
Togo	Review of ongoing monitoring tools to take into account disaggregated data which includes post-certification monitoring.

WaterAid's approach of Post Implementation Monitoring Survey (PIMS)

This survey established at the level of WaterAid makes it possible to check the sustainability of interventions over a 10-year period after the project's implementation. This is a holistic survey which takes into account sanitation as well as water. Representative samples are taken when projects are finished, after 1, 3, 5 and 10 years.

Surveys are carried out on samples taken from the comprehensive database of all water points and sanitation interventions.

Surveys take place at the community level and also at the household level. They are carried out using mobile phones through the use of the mWater platform (https://portal.mwater.co/#/). Results of the PIMS survey are used to improve or fix future interventions.

4. Emerging issues

- **CLTS efficiency**: Quality/Cost/Results (QCR) - Monitoring of rural sanitation cost (comparison between subsidy and facilitation costs) - towards a smart subsidy?
- **CLTS and SDGs:** Quality, data updating; criteria updating.
- **Continuous monitoring and evaluation** the real-time situation of sanitation (usage of ICTs; smartphones).
- **Monitoring of people with specific needs** (last mile): disaggregation of data.

5. Recommendations

- Take into account the post-certification monitoring and evaluation from the design stage of programmes and projects (example of WaterAid's PIMS, of Cameroon, of DRC, etc.).
- Put transition activities under the government's responsibility.
- Strengthen collaboration between different actors under the coordination of the State for verification and consolidation of data.
- Flexibility between actors in order to promote overall actions: example of Chad where it is possible for an NGO to intervene in order to continue the work of another NGO (work in turn which allows to cover post-ODF management).