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TRANSFORMATION TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE
AND RESILIENT WASH SERVICES

Nandom in Ghana stands out to reaching a district wide ODF journey

B. Odame-Boafo (Ghana)

PAPER 2942

Ghana has been using the Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) approach since 2010 and adistrict wide ODF has been difficult to achieve. Nandom district in the Upper West Region of Ghana seems to be on a promising path towards achieving the status. The Sustainable Sanitation and Hygiene for All (SSH4A) programme implemented by SNV, The Netherlands Development Organisation and Eight district Assemblies in Ghana has been a ladder the Nandom district leans on striving to achieve a district wide ODF status. The SSH4A Programme, funded by DFID integrates best practices in sanitation demand creation, supply chain strengthening, hygiene behaviour change communication, governance, gender and social inclusion. Nandom district is poised to being first to be declared ODF with only eight communities remaining. Over 50,000 new people have access to improved sanitation in the district accounting for an 80% coverage. This writeup show cases key lessons learnt which would be used by government and developmental partners to optimize and sustain future outcomes.

Introduction

The Ghana SSH4A Results Project formed part of a multi-country programme implemented by SNV Netherlands Development Organisation in eight countries, with financial support from DFID. SNV in Ghana worked toward the government of Ghana's goal which supposes that by 2020 all people living in Ghana should have access to adequate, safe, affordable and reliable water supply services; practice safe sanitation and hygiene; (Kofi Addah, Sanitation and water resources Minister, 2017).

The SSH4A Results Programme project contributes to the Rural Sanitation Model Strategy (RSMS) and the National Sanitation Plan by strengthening the capacity of district actors for the purpose of sustainability, to increase and improve access to sanitation and hygiene. The programme focused on strengthening the capacities of local stakeholders to plan, implement, monitor and sustain sanitation and hygiene interventions. This intervention was implemented in Nandom, Jasikan, East Gonja, Nanumba South, Chereponi, KEEA, Saboba and Lawra DistrictsThis paper provides highlights of the programme approaches implemented, key results in achieving the almost first open defecation-free district in Ghana and discussions on lessons learnt.

Nandom District

The Nandom District lies in the north western corner of the Upper West Region of Ghana between Longitude 2°25 W and 2°45W and Latitude 10°20 N and 11°00 S. It is bounded to the East and South by the Lambussie and Jirapa Districts respectively and to the North and West by the Republic of Burkina Faso. The total area of the District is put at 567.6 square km. This constitutes about 3.1% of the Region's total land area. The total estimated population of the District is 63,813. It is constituted by 88 communities with 86% of the inhabitants living in rural areas. The population density is about 89 per square kilometer. It is the most densely populated District in the region (Nandom DESSAP, 2014).

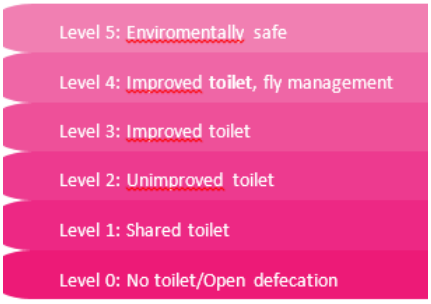
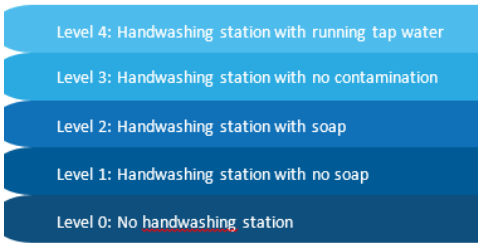
In 2014, SSH4A was implemented district-wide in Nandom district with the overall goal to ensure quality of life for rural people through improved sanitation and hygiene practices. At that time Nandom district had one of the lowest levels of sanitation coverage in Ghana – 93.3% of households still practiced open defecation and or had access to unimproved sanitation. This meant that open defecation was a common practise for more than 60,000 people in the district. After three years of implementing SSH4A programme,

Nandom district has recognized the SSH4A model an innovative and integrated approach to scaling up access to sanitation in the rural areas of Ghana which supports the RSMS model. SNV under the SSH4A project triggered 118[i] rural communities/sections in between 2014 and 2015 of which 110 have been verified and passed as ODF. Nandom therefore gives a strong signal they could be adjudged the first to take a district wide ODF direction.

Results

The results presented are based on the performance monitoring data collected, analyzed and independently verified in Ghana under the SSH4A Results Programme from June 2014 to December 2017.

Table 1. Results attained on performance monitoring data from June 2014 to December 2017

Outcome Indicator 1: access to sanitation facilities	**Outcome Indicator 3: access to handwashing stations with soap**
This indicator assesses access to new and improved latrines within the project areas using a ladder as shown in Figure 1. It is measured at the household level per an average household size of 6.9 in the Nandom district.  **Figure 1: Sanittaion ladder** Source: SNV • 54, 875 additional people had gained access to new and improved sanitation • Open defecation had reduced to 0% from a baseline of 79% with 55.8% of these people living within the poor-poorest wealth quintile. Environmentally safe toilets accounted for 24.3% from a baseline of 5.1% accessing improved toilet.	Measured at the household level, this indicator assesses the existence and quality of handwashing facilities in or near the toilet, and close to food preparation areas. The existence and proximity of these facilities serve as proxy indicators for the practice of handwashing after defecation as indicated in Figure 2 below.  **Figuur 2: Handwashing Ladder** Source: SNV Among households in Nandom it was noted that, a 100% recording was made at baseline for a population without a handwashing station whilst by the end of 2017 it was recorded that, only 21.13% had no handwashing station next to their sanitation facilities. Additionally, handwashing stations with soap increased to 88% from 3% at baseline whereas Handwashing under running water with soap increased by 65.85 from a baseline of 0%.
Outcome Indicator 2: hygienic use and maintenance of sanitation facilities	**Knowledge of critical moments of handwashing with soap**
This indicator is measured at the household level. It assesses whether a toilet is used and maintained as intended. It also measures the hygienic use and maintenance of sanitation facilities with the highest level examining whether households used functional, clean and private toilets. It reflected that; • Toilets in 64.08% of households were found to be hygienically used and maintained meaning that the toilets were found to be functional, clean and provided privacy during the period under review, compared to a baseline of 0%.	The most significant improvement in knowledge about handwashing with soap was 'after eating and defecation at 20.59% and 20.30% respectively. This indicates that progress has been made on knowledge acquisition on moments for handwashing in the Nandom district.

Sustained use of sanitation facilities

In times where sustainability is of a great concern, the monitoring data measured sustained use of the sanitation facilities in Nandom to track issues of sustainability. This indicator measures the number of people with access to a sanitation facility, and are able to use it as intended. Sustained use of sanitation

facilities increased to 83.45% from 14.77% at baseline within the Nandom area for the period under review which indicates some level of sustainability.

The standout in Nandom district-SNV's approach

SNV adopted the CLTS approach and personalised the traditional approach under a more innovative and multifaceted themes to arrive at the current results. SNV supported Nandom District with activities under the below various themes to support the district embark on the journey towards a district wide coverage.

Sanitation demand creation

- Supported Nandom district to lead planning, implementation and monitoring of the demand creation activities.
- Environmental health officers as lead facilitators were trained and given technical support to aid in community triggering using the CLTS approach.
- Mobilised and trained more than 400 Natural leaders who served as community volunteer sanitation focal points.
- Supported post-triggering events including interpersonal channels to motivate people to construct latrines. Informed choice materials giving Information on low-cost options and use of local materials were provided.

Hygiene behavioural change communication (BCC)

- Supported the District to develop a formative research and a behavioural change communication document and sanitation strategies.
- Capacity building on planning, implementation and monitoring of BCC initiatives on sanitation and hygiene.
- Hygiene campaigns and outreaches included radio, large gathering, small gathering, roadshows, household to household and Community van information dissemination using local dialects.

Sanitation supply chains

- Local Artisans trained in technical construction on SAFI latrine, its latrine pricing options, and to build understanding of market potential whilst building their capacities to expand their sanitation businesses.
- Developed informed choice materials on rural sanitation technology options targeting poor households and people living with disability.



Figure 3: SAFI Latrine

Source: SNV

WASH governance

- Supported District in Setting up and training of multi-stakeholder platforms for alignment and harmonization of sanitation efforts in the districts.
- Both BCC and sanitation plans were developed through consultation with the District traditional chiefs, SHEP, health and other key stakeholders.
- Coordinated a number of multi-stakeholders and quarterly sanitation progress meetings to review progress and share experiences on planning and implementing activities in addressing challenges faced.
- Developed a sanitation monitoring plan in consultation with district focal persons(DFPs) to record and review monthly sanitation progress.

Lessons learnt and discussions

1. *A multi-faceted channel to behaviour change communication*
   SNV in partnership with the district embarked on behaviour change campaigns. The campaigns made use of diverse channels based on a formative research and subsequently midterm results conducted in the district. Roadshows, large gatherings, small gatherings, household to household-visitation were the channels used to communicate to community members on behaviour change. This for the number of times hygiene campaigns were rolled out proved effective with the Nandom district. Effective behaviour change and communication strategy usage had the same key messages juggled to target all groups of people within the communities. This contributed to positively influencing attitudes and behaviours in Nandom. It accelerated building momentum to ending open defecation and practicing handwashing with soap.
2. *The poor are not always a problem*
   Nandom District has a considerable number of its people being poor. About 56% of the respondents as aforementioned are still in the poor wealth quintile[ii]per SNV's survey conducted in December 2017. It is the school of thought that the high proportion (56%) of poor households could have implications for access to toilet and sanitation and grossly its sustainability. However, field observation in the district suggest otherwise. There is rather increased access to toilet and sanitation by the poor-poorest wealth quintile .It could rather be that it can be challenging for these groups of people to get to the highest level (fig 1) of affording environmentally safe toilets. The scenario in Nandom lends credence to the fact that there are other factors that can remove poverty barrier and promote behaviour change and increased access to toilet sanitation. The people and even those in the poor categories of Nandom embracing the concept is a sure way to being resilient towards the behaviour on open defecation.
3. *Traditional authorities*
   The most significant factor has been the influence employed by the paramount chief of Nandom over all sub-chiefs in his paramountcy. Leaderships like the role played by chiefs to lead their people to embrace the program helped greatly to bring success. All chiefs met on regular basis on sanitation and were always challenged to improve sanitation in the district at such meetings. Chiefs under each area council were admonished to make ending open defecation a priority. These leaders were tasked to acquire a latrine of their own serving as role models to their communities.. In their commune meetings, the target to end open defecation is set as a priority on the agenda by the paramount chief which must be complied by all sub-chiefs. In view of that, a factor that has kept Nandom progressively on the district wide ODF journey has been the commitment of the chiefs of Nandom communities to stop open defecation.
4. *The commitment and leadership of district authorities*
   The role of the District authorities, District Environmental Officer (DEHO) and the District Focal Person (DFP) in post-triggering monitoring are also critical and has had a greater impact to a larger coverage. It is important to mention that the people of Nandom quickly embraced the BCC messages of the programme and decided to practice good hygiene behaviours including installing improved household toilets. On the ground, The DEHO was passionate to see Nandom desist from the act of open defecation under his reign. This is vastly shown in the district recording a 0.00% in open defecation by the end of 2017 per survey conducted connoting a great achievement. At a speech delivered by the Regional environmental health at the just ended ODF celebration on the 11th of January 2018, it was stated that "renewed commitment on the part of the staff and management of the Nandom District Assembly" is a substantial factor to the progress made. The District authorities have also been proactive at posting new Environmental Health officers to augment staff strength.
5. *Monitoring and follow-ups*
   There was also very intensive post triggering activities which were monitored for outcomes using a monitoring tool that was understood by all parties involved. In monitoring, a district focal person was chosen by the district who is an environmental health personnel in the district. SNV pays for lunch and

fuel on daily basis, knowing that is one of the main challenges of a district to slowing down progress. Thus, the financial assistance motivated greatly the DFP for a good outcome. Natural leaders were also trained to embark on follow-ups within their communities. Focal persons were tasked to engage in one-on-one interactions where necessary, to have a close monitoring and follow up system with households. Continuous follow up which is inevitable per this adopted approach will again be one of the tools to sustain the progress made.

6. *Good timing of supply side of CLTS*
   Safi Latrine, a cheap (at $60-$70) but quality type of latrine to serve even the poor wealth quintiles was trained on. Most district local artisans took it as a business and actively sold and installed the latrines in various communities to aid the course of ending open defecation. The willingness to pay by all wealth quintiles was positive. As at now, the district is the leading district with installed Safi Latrine and ODF declared communities in Ghana.
7. *Financing CLTS activities*
   SNV acted as both an implementer and donor to the district on activities. SNV held the purse and did not channel it through the district assemblies. Though this mode brought in some form of apathy, it was seen to be the best option for optimum results. SNV paid and accounted for money used and not the other way round. The Results based financing approach employed made Nandom chalk this high success.

Reaching the last mile

In 2016, a regional ODF league table was established and due to the commitment by SNV, district and the people of Nandom, Nandom led the league table. Upper West Region where Nandom is located ranked firstand under Upperwest, Nandom takes the lead on the league table (DLT REPORT, 2017). While good progress was achieved within these three years, much more is needed to achieve the last mile in sight. Achieving district-wide ODF requires multi, alternative, tailored approaches to reaching remaining households. Nandom District authorities have taken sanitation and hygiene issues very seriously and are determined to get the whole district ODF. In Nandom only eight communities representing 20% coverage are yet to become ODF per SNV's endline report. In an ODF celebration recently in the district, the district is determined to be the 'first district- wide open defecation free in Ghana by December 2018. These eight communities are fairly big communities and there is the need to adopt a new strategy or firm up old strategies. Other worrying factors include; temporary migration which could have a toll on outcome.

Conclusion and recommendation

Having a respected and a strong committed community leader who takes interest in eradicating open defecation leads to collective action. It proves to speed up processes and that is what Nandom has showcased.

Gaining the commitment of district assemblies' leadership is critical to achieving desired levels of success and sustainability. Their support is even more critical at the programme's conclusion to sustain the gains made in access to sanitation and hygiene. SNV's approach in adopting CLTS was multifaceted, the various themes under which SNV provided support to the district assembly contributed to the results attained by the Nandom district. The programme involved key stakeholders in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the hygiene campaigns, which contributed strongly to the success of interventions.

The results based method of ensuring a follow up as well as having a close monitoring system and an up-to-date monitoring data proved to be very effective. It led more to accountability and transparency. The motivation in financing lunch and fuel of responsible Environmental health officers who served as SNV's DFP accounted for the overwhelming results in Nandom. Though follow up is extremely important in CLTS, a continuous stream of income for a person gives some form of motivation and assurance they are well thought of. It in turn produces a good result. Perhaps, if the funds had been directed into the coffers of district assembly for monitoring purpose, it would have had a diverted cause and would definitely not have been a motivating substance for the monitors making the results rather poor.

Government at national, regional and District assemblies should commit resources to the rollout of all strategies that SNV has supported the district develop. One main challenge is, Government has not been in the lead when it relates to sanitation resources as such it should be seen as the lead in resource support and should rather be backed by external organizations such as NGOs.

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Notes

The original 88 communties in Nadom were sectioned to achieve the 118 communities.
Poor wealth quintile category lives on $292 per year per adult, that is, less than a dollar per day.