Loughborough University

This item was submitted to Loughborough's Research Repository by the author.
Items in Figshare are protected by copyright, with all rights reserved, unless otherwise indicated.

Community quality control monitoring of latrines and boreholes in the Central North Region of Burkina Faso

PLEASE CITE THE PUBLISHED VERSION

PUBLISHER

© WEDC, Loughborough University

VERSION

VoR (Version of Record)

PUBLISHER STATEMENT

This work is made available according to the conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0) licence. Full details of this licence are available at: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/

LICENCE

CC BY-NC-ND 4.0

REPOSITORY RECORD

Kere, Cyrille, Damien B Kabore, Lambert Z. Nikiema, and Jean-Philippe Debus. 2019. “Community Quality Control Monitoring of Latrines and Boreholes in the Central North Region of Burkina Faso”. figshare. https://hdl.handle.net/2134/35783.

41st WEDC International Conference, Egerton University, Nakuru, Kenya, 2018

TRANSFORMATION TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE
AND RESILIENT WASH SERVICES

Community quality control monitoring of latrines and boreholes in the Central North Region of Burkina Faso

C. Kere, D. B. Kabore, L. Z. P. Nikiema & J. P. Debus (Burkina Faso)

PAPER 3011

With funding from the Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust, Catholic Relief Services implemented the Kom-Yilma project, "Happy and Healthy Children." The program served 118 schools in two provinces in the Central North region of Burkina Faso, Bam and Sanmatenga, from March 2014 to August 2017. The purpose of the program was to encourage the adoption of key hygiene practices by the teachers, students, as well as to facilitate access to water and sanitation through social behavior change strategies and by building sex segregated, child-friendly latrines and boreholes. The Kom-Yilma team developed a community accountability approach to more effectively empower and involve local communities in the process of constructing sound infrastructure. This strategy not only ensures the construction quality of the latrines and boreholes, but also sustainable buy-in and community ownership of these new latrines and boreholes so the communities maintain them after the project.

Introduction

Integrating accountability within projects, especially towards beneficiaries is a requirement in good program management practices This is unfortunately not always systematic. One corollary result not systematically incorporating accountability into the programs is poor program quality and communities failing to meet the program outcomes. The programs were not designed in consideration of institutional issues, did not take into consideration the dynamic nature of the communities' needs, and the communities were not involved in the development of program actions, technology choices and plans for post-construction management. Catholic Relief Services (CRS) understands the nature of conducting water, hygiene and sanitation (WASH) projects and how to work well with beneficiary communities: in order for the project to be sustainable and high quality, the project participants need to be involved and empowered from the beginning, constructing latrines and boreholes, as well as involved through a community quality control monitoring system. CRS developed and implemented a monitoring and evaluation system which is part of the overall accountability approach, intended to take into account the feedback of project participants in the decisions during the construction phase of the works and throughout the project cycle.

Project intervention strategy

The Kom-Yilma "Clean and Healthy Child" project promotes three key hygiene practices (hand washing with soap, safe water consumption, use and maintenance of latrine) at school through WASH Friendly School approach developed by USAID's Hygiene Improvement Project (HIP). The project covered 118 schools in the provinces of Bam and Sanmatenga in the Central North Region of Burkina from March 2014 to February 2017.

The main activities of the project were: a) stakeholder mobilization to develop and implement plans to improve WASH conditions in schools, led by school communities with participation of teachers, students and parents b) communication for behavioral change through training, film screenings and teaching hygiene in the classroom, c) the promotion of water treatment products and safe handling and storage of drinking water in classrooms, d) the construction of water and sanitation facilities taking into account the specifics needs of girls and boys, e) the reinforcement of the capacities of the communities for the follow-up control of the quality

of the boreholes and latrines and for their maintenance and their sustainable management through local resource mobilization strategies.

The project approach was participatory through the involvement of local communities throughout its cycle. As part the approach, activities such as community self-assessments of WASH conditions in schools were conducted quarterly and lead to the implementation of corrective actions for lasting changes in behavior. Another action is the involvement of communities in monitoring service levels and management performance of boreholes and latrines to ensure their sustainability.

Considering the high importance of effective school communities and local stakeholders participation of and their contributions to the decisions regarding project's orientation to ensure the quality of the interventions, the Kom-Yilma project developed an accountability approach aimed at collecting and taking into account community feedback in the project management.

Project approach for community quality control monitoring

Accountability is defined as, "working with communities, program participants, partners and civil society to treat them with mutual respect and dignity and to ensure interactive communication, participatory planning, accountability, subsidiarity and quality in all programs."[1]

Systematizing the project's accountability approach for monitoring community control of the project activities consists of :

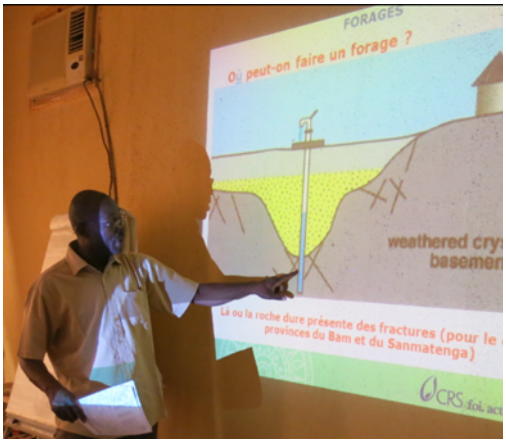
Begin by defining accountability commitments. This project had three main accountability criteria that guided implementation: a) ensuring information sharing and dynamic communication with program participants, in particular local institutions and communities; b) ensuring strong community participation; c) ensuring that a response mechanism for program participants and communities exists and is functional. This gives the project agents and the different stakeholders the advantage of being at the same level of information and commitment for the quality of the project interventions.

1. it is therefore from this accountability framework that **a mechanism for collecting, processing and recording feedbacks is defined** and introduced to users with the aim to supportthe continuous improvement of the project intervention quality. This offers guarantees to the communities that their suggestions and complaints strongly contribute to the improvement of the project's actions insofar as they feel that they have not only their say but also and above all that it will contribute to the improvement of their living conditions to the extent that they can use and manage quality and sustainable services.
2. **Design and implement a communication plan** that takes into account the most popular means of communication within the communities. This method ensures a communication system that puts all stakeholders at the same level of information.
3. **organize information and training meetings for the communities** on the planned technologies, the key stages of implementation, including the key aspects of observations, the community control monitoring approach of infrastructure quality as well as their roles and responsibilities, the chain of feedbacks to address any shortcomings at the company level. These actions thus allowed communities to know from the start what they were engaging in, which is also an important element of accountability. They were attended by the beneficiary school communities, the community structures in charge of the management of the works (Association of Water Users, School Management Committee, Village Development Advisor, Association of Parents of Pupils) so as to involve all the structures even to decide for the community;

Information and training meetings content

- These meetings clarify that the communities are the final owners of the project activities, and it is their role and their responsibility to contribute to the project's success. For that they had to understand:
  - The planned technologies and their specific characteristics (e.g., service level, life-cycle costs, management models);
  - The process of completion of the works, including key steps, stakeholders for each step, the importance of the proper location choice and how communities can participate in the selection;
  - The key quality elements that are monitored during implementation and geared towards the communities' level of technical capacity. For example, they are taught how to check the depths of the pits (see photo 1), the quality of the blocks, the quality of materials, how to choose borehole sites and latrines, the maximum number of bricks a bag of cement can make, the conditions of making and watering bricks, the frequency of monitoring, as well as including all information on the previous boreholes including both achievements and failures;

- Communicate the different voices of interpellation and the mechanism of feedbacks and complaints;
- Their roles so they could create more effective participation so they could receive more timely and pertinent feedback, particularly from the activities about the importance of the warranty period;
- The requirements for sustainable management of structures, including the mobilization of resources necessary for proper maintenance of these structures, the average costs of spare parts and their service life.



Photograph 1. Explaining how boreholes work

Source: CRS Burkina Faso



Photograph 2. Group work on community-led quality control

Source: CRS Burkina Faso

1. After educating and training the communities, **it is a question of empowering the communities** to effectively monitor construction quality control. To this end, through their monitoring, the communities provide daily feedback on the construction activities progress, but also on the quality of the workmanship on latrines and boreholes to ensure they remain in accordance with the quality standards on which they were trained. The feedback, generally collected through SMS or phone calls, is analyzed by the project team and integrated into the decision-making process by challenging everyone to work in accordance with the project specifications. WASH committees, consisting of parents of students, the village development committee, and the mother educators, are set up for this purpose. Thus, communities are strongly involved in the implementation phase, so that they can contribute to progressively addressing imperfections to ensure that the final products offer satisfactory quality guarantees and expected service levels;
2. **A feedback register** records and tracks that adequate response is given to each community suggestion and complaint. The Monitoring, Evaluation and Accountability team compiles feedback based on the date of issue, the complaint or the defects observed, the responsible actors, the corrective actions taken and completion date.

3. The involvement of the communities in the process of provisional acceptance of the works, through their participation on the sides of the contractor, the CRS agents and the decentralized technical services of the government, giving them the authority to endorse a particular construction or raise defects or other issues that would undermine the quality of the facility and service performance. For this purpose, a checklist considering the following verification elements is used for the provisional acceptance:

– At the boreholes level, this is the flow test, leak test, concrete strength test of the superstructure, turbidity control, the conformity of the dimensions of the superstructure and the soakaway pit, etc.;
– At the latrine level, natural lighting is checked, design and dimensions of dropholes, smoothness of concrete around dropholes, pit dimension, ventpipes, door locks, etcs.



Photograph 3. Provisional reception of latrines with communities

Source: CRS Burkina Faso



Photograph 4. Provisional reception of the boreholes with the communities

Source: CRS Burkina Faso

The project's approach is not limited to community involvement and empowerment in the design process, but also gives the community informed oversight, the possibility of participating in information collection, and in decision-making about the quality of project interventions. This approach, which complements the work of the engineering consultants, is much more efficient and effective than the work of engineering consultants that have been contracted.



Photograph 5. A borehole built by the project

Source: Sam Phelps for CRS



Photograph 6. Latrines built by the project

Source: Sam Phelps for CRS

Principle results:

- Communities felt strongly involved and empowered in the process of building water and sanitation facilities;
- Communities more easily gained ownership of the infrastructures built by the project because they consider those infrastructures to be the result of their engagement and follow-up actions;
- Communities are more familiar with how the systems work, the need for maintenance, and associated costs, including spare parts, replacement frequency, etc. For example, most schools have a management and maintenance plan, as well as a resource mobilization strategy to maintain good level of service ;
- The various suggestions and complaints from the communities allowed the project to address several defects (non-compliance of well depth, poor concrete dosage, poor fabrication of concrete blocks, poor siting of latrine, etc.) directly in the field. The engineering consultants that were recruited by the project have not always been able to do this;
- Through increased understanding of the clauses in construction contracts, communities were less likely to be manipulated by contractors. For example, if a contractor requests free workforce or local materials to the community, while he is paid to provide skilled workers and materials that meet certain quality standards and are not available locally. For communities, this is the first time that they are involved, empowered, and held accountable for the outcomes of a project, while being given the opportunity to provide constructive criticisms;
- The final evaluation of the project in May 2017 showed high level of community satisfaction not only with the quality of the water and sanitation systems, but also in their feelings of being respected and considered by the project.

Difficulties

- Communities sometimes have demands that are irrelevant with priorities and civil engineering standards;
- Insufficient community organization to ensure daily supervision of construction works;
- The lack of communication from contractors in advance about their work schedule , as expected by communities. This has not always allowed the communities to prepare themselves through sociocultural practices (especially for the construction of water points);
- Recording feedback in the complaints register is not always systematic, given the workload; however, brainstorming was often done to update the registry;
- Insufficient resources allocated, especially for communication to collect and feedback processing;

Lessons learned

- Community-led quality monitoring of construction is not only a guarantee of quality, but also an efficient approach to empower communities and create local ownership of the water and sanitation services[2];
- The approach has enabled integration of socio-cultural aspects in development of the water and sanitation facilities which contributes to increase ownership by the users particularly, the habits and customs with regard to borehole drilling.[3];
- The approach ensures quality of the intervention by triangulating the information sourced from the contracted engineering consultants, who are likely to make arrangements with the building contractors that they are supposed to monitor;
- The feedback mechanism shows high satisfaction from communities for being able to share feedback directly with project staff rather than relying on a rather indirect feedback mechanism based on sending forms or usinga hotline[4].
- Information and quality training are a prerequisite for the development of any water and sanitation services in the communities to guarantee their sustainability[5];
- Increased cost efficiency through enhanced division of monitoring tasks between communities who can handle non-technical monitoring and consultant engineers required for technical monitoring.;

Perspectives

- Continue this experience in the second phase of the project and include an additional activity, namely conducting introductory project meetings in the various villages who will potentially benefit from the intervention of the project as well as at the level of the communes to ensure that local communities become active project participants;

- Integrate ICT4D for project officers through a form to facilitate the systematic recording of feedback, follow-up, and closure;
- Work towards better organization of communities by forming groups or empowering a different person each day to take responsibility in daily monitoring.

Notes

[1] Catholic Relief Services, Haiti. Cadre de redevabilité, Avril 2012, p1
[2] Catholic Relief Services, Kom-Yilma project Final Evaluation Report, 2017: 53
[3] Kom-Yilma project staff field visits reports and exchange with the communities (2015-2017)
[4] Catholic Relief Services, Kom-Yilma project Final Evaluation Report, 2017: 45
[5] Kom-Yilma project staff field visits reports and exchange with the communities (2015-2017)

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to extend thanks to the other Kom-Yilma team members: Isseta ILBOUDO/KABORE, Robinson, Heather, Moussa Dominique BANGRE and Souleymane Diallo.

References

Catholic Relief Services, Burkina Faso. *Manuel Opérationnel de Suivi Evaluation, Redevabilité et Apprentissage du projet Kom-Yilma.* Aout 2014.

Catholic Relief Services, Burkina Faso. *Cahier de participant à la formation sur la gestion et l'entretien des ouvrages*. Février 2015.

Catholic Relief Services, Haitie. *Cadre de redevabilité*, Avril 2012.

CERPES, *Rapport d'évaluation finale du projet Kom-Yilma*, Mai 2017.

Save The Children. *Dossier-guide sur la redevabilité des programmes.* 2013.

Contact details

Cyrille KERE
Catholic Relief Services
Tel: +22667055782
Email: cyrille.kere@crs.org
Website: www.crsg.org

Damien B. KABORE
Catholic Relief Services
Tel: +22667055754
Email: damien.kabore@crs.org
Website: www.crsg.org