

# Access to improved latrines for the poorest people

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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 are 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The notes produced are not meant to be polished or exhaustive, and they are not peer reviewed.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. As such, they are not for citation.

***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 the 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](mailto:clts@ids.ac.uk)***

## 1. Description of issues/challenges

- **A significant proportion of the rural population lives below the poverty line.**
  - This raises an equity problem when it comes to improved latrine access.
  - The poorest people are those who find it most difficult to rebuild their latrines when they collapse. As such, it is these households that are most likely to lapse back to open defecation (OD).
  - It costs more to build a sustainable latrine.
  - There are very few funding mechanisms available for the poor.
- **Identification and targeting are difficult: how can the poorest be identified? Every household claims to be amongst the poorest.**



## 2. Current solutions (including country/ organisation)

- World Vision Mali:
  - Partnership with a microfinance fund (RMCR) to grant credit to WASH committees for sanitation infrastructures.
  - “WASH core” of community leaders which facilitates the development of solutions for improved toilets for the poorest and the promotion of social self-help and youth involvement.
  - Success story: there are several ODF villages where every household (even the poorest) has improved latrines (sometimes just made up of a cement layer on the slab) equipped with a handwashing facility.
  - The establishment of a coordination group which integrates all community stakeholders, including core WASH groups working in this sector, in order to address the issue of the most vulnerable.
- Togo
  - Participatory development of local technologies (with local materials such as wood, stones, etc.)
  - The facilitator emphasises the need for assistance and support to the most vulnerable people, especially during post-triggering follow-up.
  - Future objective: work with the social assistance department, piggy-back on their social safety net programme: what targeting criteria do they use?
- In Mauritania there is a national agency responsible for combatting inequality.
  - 150,000 people have been identified as extremely poor.
  - A UNICEF project is currently pending: build on this programme to help the poorest households to improve their unsafe latrines.
    - Eligible villages: those with ODF status.
    - Question: What is the best approach? Donate a slab, cement or offer financial support?
    - Risk: this approach could jeopardise self-building in neighbouring villages.
- Burkina Faso (national strategy):
  - The poorest are identified during the situational analysis and the standard CLTS approach applied.
  - At the end of the CLTS training, the poorest households receive a cash subsidy of 25% of the total cost.
  - The household is then expected to dig the pit and to have the slab installed.
  - Problem: there is no certainty that the targeted households are the poorest. Chiefs/leaders may be biased.
- Senegal (GSF):
  - Village Development Associations (VDA) have a poorest household identification matrix (drawn up by the community).
  - Making the most of village solidarity funds : every woman contributes each week. This enables the donation of sanitation loans and construction of latrines for the poorest.
- Senegal
  - Local authorities (council) have a budget line to help the poorest.
  - Targeted subsidies offered in exchange for manual work.
- Gambia
  - “Never Again in My Community” campaign.
  - Train youths, who mobilise other young people in the community to build latrines for the poorest.
- Ghana
  - National directives to help the most vulnerable have just been put in place. For better targeting, directives recommend the use of the social safety net programme (LEAP). The directives also provide eligibility criteria for selecting communities and type of subsidy.
  - UNICEF is about to launch a subsidy programme which targets the poorest households. Assessment will be made by the WASHPaLS research programme.
  - Global Communities: in ODF communities, Digni-Loos (foundations + slab + plastic piping) are donated to the most vulnerable.

- WaterAid Nigeria: under sanitation marketing activities
  - The poorest households are identified by village chiefs and communities.
  - Demonstration latrines are installed in the poorest households.
  - Sales agents attempt to convince the richest households to pay for the poorest household latrines. For example, one should try and avail of the village solidarity customs whereby every year the richest women buy food for the poorest.
- Global Communities Liberia
  - Village savings groups: members of the community contribute to a “cash box”. 3 keys are entrusted to 3 different people.
    - The funds are used to grant loans for the improvement of latrines, amongst other things. The most vulnerable households do not need to pay back the loan.
    - Transparency: funds are accounted for in public prior to each contribution period.
    - This system has been set up in over 500 villages.

As a conclusion, we have identified two main types of interventions in order to improve access to improved latrines by the most vulnerable:

1. Home-grown support facilities for the benefit of the poorest:
  - Social self-help (Nigeria, Gambia).
  - Village savings funds which allow the granting of sanitation loans and helping the most vulnerable (Senegal, Liberia).
- External interventions:
  - Targeted partial subsidies (Ghana, pending in Mauritania).
  - Where it exists, it can prove useful to piggyback on a social safety net system.

### 3. Emerging questions

#### Eligibility

- For targeted subsidies, which communities should be eligible?
  - Everyone agrees that ODF communities alone should be eligible

#### Help form

- Under which form should the targeted help be granted? Gift of materials? Financial support?
  - Suggestion: “supplier rebate” system (the household never sees the money; the tradesman is only paid once the latrine has been built).
- Is micro-finance the best solution?
  - Would it not be preferable to target microcredit to female micro-entrepreneur which could re-sell slabs in their village?

#### Targeting

- How should the poorest households be identified?
  - It is important that the community itself leads the targeting: criteria should be agreed upon then the community should designate the relevant households.
  - A target monitoring committee should be put in place.

#### Sustainability

- Can community self-help be sustainable?

#### Programming

- How can it be ensured that self-building in neighbouring villages is not compromised?

- How can it be ensured that the intervention really benefits the most vulnerable?
  - Lessons from Cambodia and Timor Leste regarding the use of vouchers: the most vulnerable households did not claim their vouchers (too embarrassed, too marginalised); the most vulnerable must be given better support to help them claim their vouchers.

#### **4. Recommendations**

- Develop a national strategy in order to help the poorest households.
- The issue of equity should be considered right from the time of the initial situational analysis.
- A formative survey is required in order to develop a targeting method.
- Disaggregated data needs to be collected for M&E purposes.
- Institutionalise support to the poorest in order to increase sustainability.