



Learning and innovating: Community Clustering – an innovative way to sustain Community Led Total Sanitation in Communities

WASH & Learn: a partnership beyond boundaries

The WASH & Learn Programme is an ongoing three-year WASH in Schools programme being implemented by Simavi and six local partners: CABDA in Kenya, UFUNDIKO and TDFT in Tanzania and JESE, HEWASA, and EMESCO in Uganda (see figure 1). The key objectives of the programme are: providing access to WASH service in schools and communities; ensuring sustainability of the WASH service; and facilitate learning and innovation with the local partners. The programme is funded by *Walking for Water 2016-2018*, *Rotary district 1570*, *Aqua for All* and *Waterloo Foundation*.

The programme has an integrated WASH approach working on water supply, sanitation and hygiene behaviour improvements in which both schools and surrounding communities are targeted. The programme is working on the demand site with communities, on creating a positive enabling environment with all stakeholders and ensure that people use the WASH services properly. The local context and the current capacities and experiences of our local partners are taken as starting point from which specific country and partner approaches are developed.

Learning and knowledge sharing

At the heart of the WASH & Learn Programme is learning and knowledge sharing which is used to monitor what partners are doing, improving the application of the sustainability tools and approaches as well as identifying novel ways of programme implementation that will yield sustainability. Learning and knowledge sharing in the WASH & Learn programme is undertaken at planning, knowledge sharing and evaluation level by partners as well as at an interpersonal level among the partner organizations.

The learning focus within the programme is based on the following six learning themes:

1. Cost Recovery Planning, bringing WASH investment stakeholders into an agreement based on the FIETS sustainability principles.
2. Risks assessment and mitigation, for pre-project execution, mid-project operation and post project management to increase sustainability.
3. Menstrual hygiene management, to ensure girls well-being (performance, health, acceptability) in schools, proper menstrual waste management, menstrual hygiene and better facility usage during menstrual periods.
4. School Health clubs, to encourage other students and teachers within the school to apply appropriate WASH behaviour.
5. Water as a business, which focuses on new ways of managing water supply systems by the local partners, besides the traditional community management model.
6. Community clusters to promote sustainable community total led sanitation using households as sustainability units which monitor hygiene in the communities and support WASH initiatives.

This paper presents the learnings on theme 6. Community Clustering. Learning themes 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 will be presented in three different papers.

Acronyms

CHW	Community Health Worker
CLTS	Community Total Led Sanitation
CRP	Cost Recovery Planning
CABDA	Community Assets Building Development Action
EMESCO	EMESCO Development Foundation
FIETS	Financial Institutional Environmental Technological Social
JESE	Joint Effort to Save the Environment
HEWASA:	Health through Water and Sanitation
VHT	Village Health Team
WASH	Water Sanitation and Hygiene

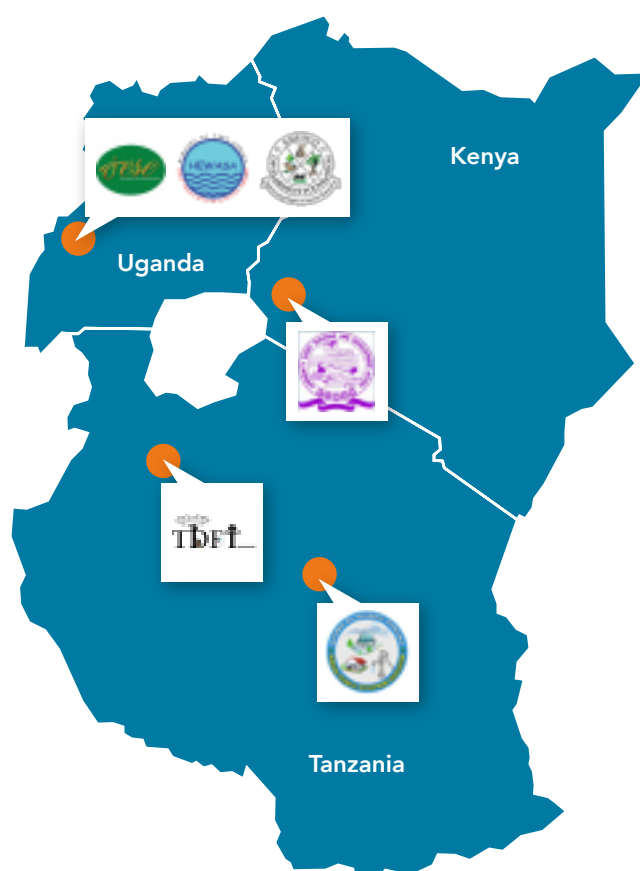


Figure 1. Map region and organisations involved.



Community Clustering for Community Total Led Sanitation

The Community Clustering approach is a practice three Uganda partner organisations JESE, HEWASA and EMESCO under the WASH & Learn Programme decided to adopt in ensuring sustainability of the Community Total Led Sanitation (CLTS) approach. The Community Clustering approach was adopted after noting that some of the communities were triggered more than once before the WASH & Learn programme, hence the CLTS approach was less effective. Furthermore, after declaration of open defecation free zones backsliding often happened; it was not yet a sustainable change.

The CLTS approach originates from Kamal Kar's evaluation of WaterAid Bangladesh and their local partner organisation – VERC's (Village Education Resource Centre is a local NGO) traditional water and sanitation programme and his subsequent work in Bangladesh in late 1999 and into 2000. This led to the discovery of the CLTS approach in which use of PRA methods enables local communities to analyse their sanitation conditions and collectively internalise the terrible impact of OD on public health and on the entire neighbourhood environment. When triggered systematically and combined with 'no-hardware subsidy' policy and a hands-off approach by the facilitator, CLTS could provoke urgent collective local action to become totally ODF. A new style of facilitation has evolved. In its classic form, this uses the crude local word for "shit" and

encourages local communities to visit the dirtiest and filthiest areas in the neighbourhood. Appraising and analysing their practices shocks, disgusts and shames people. This style is provocative and fun, and is hands-off in leaving decisions and action to the community.¹ Mosler, Mosch and Harter in a 2018 Journal article on CLTS point out after some years of implementation, it is evident that CLTS is successful in engaging people in latrine construction and usage. However, CLTS has focused on building rather than on maintaining and repairing latrines in case of damage. It is not uncommon for people who were using latrines to abandon damaged, collapsed, and full pit latrines and return to open defecation. They further note that some latrine users become discouraged and leave their broken or full latrines, while others do not. Slippage (backsliding) rates of up to 92% have been reported.²

JESE, HEWASA and EMESCO borrowed the Community Clustering approach from the Tanganyika Africa National Union (TANU) ten-cell (nyumba kumi) system, which according to Charlotte Cross (2014) was adapted from Maoist China and introduced in Dar es Salaam in 1964, subsequently extending across the country.³

In this system a leader was to be elected for each cell, comprised of roughly ten houses, to increase mass participation in TANU and the extension of the party throughout society. Ten-cell leaders also performed

1. Kamal and Chambers (2008) *Community Led Total Sanitation Hand Book*, Plan International, UK.

2. Mosler H-J, Mosch S, Harter M (2018) Is Community-Led Total Sanitation connected to the rebuilding of latrines? Quantitative evidence from Mozambique. *PLoS ONE* 13(5): e0197483. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0197483>

3. Cross, Charlotte (2014). Community policing and the politics of local development in Tanzania. *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 52(4) pp. 517–540.

a law and order function, assuming responsibility for liaison with police and courts, responding to crime, collecting taxes, summoning people to work on development projects and gathering detailed information about their neighbours.

In WASH & Learn programme, the three organisations are using the Community Clustering approach linked to the CLTS activities. Within the intervention communities the three partners mapped out clusters ranging from 10 to 25 households that would support and monitor the sanitation and hygiene situation around them. The size of the cluster was decided on in consultation with the local government and community leaders. These clusters were sensitized on water, sanitation and hygiene initiatives such as the importance of latrine use, handwashing, personal and household hygiene as well as waste management both at household and community level. They were further empowered with skills such as tippy tap making skills, liquid soap processing, managing their saving and loans schemes while offering soft loans for sanitation in their communities, making reusable pads as well as menstrual hygiene management among others. Every cluster has a cluster head that is the link between the cluster and the local government and the partner organisation.

The objectives of forming Community Clusters for CLTS are:

- + To mobilise small community units to actively monitor and routinely discuss sanitation and hygiene concerns;
- + To link local government to households for easy sanitation and hygiene tracking;
- + To activate household level WASH support mechanisms for sanitation and hygiene as well as social inclusion;
- + To create sanitation and hygiene pressure groups to advocate for WASH at household level;
- + To motivate community members to take lead on WASH initiatives.

Steps Taken to make Community Clusters

1. Conduct CLTS and WASH sensitization: Before forming clusters the community is led through a CLTS participatory approach. Using emotions facilitators create disgust and shame referencing sanitation and hygiene situations in community and getting the community members to assess the risks and identify mitigation measures.
2. Identify community household clusters/neighbourhoods: This is undertaken by taking note of the number of households in a particular neighbourhood based on a who lives where criteria. Then the

households are grouped into clusters of 10 to 25 households. The names of the household heads per household in each cluster are registered and a cluster meeting is called.

3. Share the information with the local leaders and invite them to the cluster meetings: The registers are shared with the local leaders (VHTs/CHW, Parish Chiefs, Local Councillors etc.). A brief on the clusters and why they have been formed is made to the respective local leaders. They are then invited to attend the inaugural cluster meeting and given priority in playing a role in them.
4. Educate community clusters about what community clustering is about, why it is being done, how it is done and for what/its advantages: The inaugural meeting serves a sensitization platform in which the cluster roles are defined as well as the local/village government's role. The clusters learn more about what it means to be part of the cluster, how it benefits them and the kind of activities to be undertaken per cluster.
5. Get the cluster members to choose a cluster head: After the sensitization process. When cluster members have bought into the idea of clustering and understand it. They choose a cluster head from among themselves. This person plays an overall role of mobilising the cluster into active self-monitoring units, into undertaking cluster assignments among other interventions. The cluster head also follows up on cluster activities and is the focal point of contact for the cluster.
6. Refresh their perception of CLTS and WASH knowledge as well as on the importance of both: The preceding meetings will entail refresher trainings on CLTS and WASH as well as reflection meetings and peer to peer engagements.
7. Stimulate the cluster members capacity to do community monitoring and participate in household level CLTS/WASH initiatives: Clusters are given checklists to observe community hygiene and WASH related concerns and an action mechanism is put in place e.g. conducting meetings and having collective WASH engagements.
8. Motivate cluster members with life skills according to their needs: Trainings in waste management, making reusable pads, liquid soap making, manure processing among others are given to clusters according to their needs to boost their CLTS/WASH adoption and advocacy levels.
9. Encourage local leaders to engage the clusters and also follow them up: local leaders are to be involved at every step of the cluster; that is formation, trainings, collective action, monitoring and meetings.

Community Clustering Action

Mobilize small community units to actively monitor and routinely discuss sanitation and hygiene concerns

The Community Clustering approach mobilizes 10 – 25 household into groups that are triggered to monitor sanitation and hygiene around their neighbourhood as well as their own households and routinely discuss about it. It focuses on the neighbourhood thus breaking the village into household level monitoring units who ensure WASH pre-requisites are sustained. The groups choose a cluster head who calls for meetings and guides the activities to be conducted in every unit. In some clusters members choose leaders from households with poor WASH conditions to head the cluster in order to motivate them to improve their conditions through leading by example.



EMESCO Case

At Igayaza A, a community cluster of 20 households enjoys routine meetings to discuss concerns affecting their water source which they argue has a wide scope of users. At this particular meeting they worry that what happened to one of the water sources (scrap dealers vandalized the parts) in their community, could happen again at Igayaza A if they do not become more vigilant. Scrap dealers and spare part thieves are on the loose and the community cluster decides the nearest household to the water source should become more alert and work closely with the Water User Committee (particularly the chairperson and caretaker) and the local councilor (I).

The Water User Committee appreciates the clusters and see this particular cluster as a means to ensuring the safety of the water source.

At Kyakyogoza Village EMESCO has had competitions among the clusters for a hygiene prize. This left most of the households equipped with self-driven hygiene implements such as the tippy taps, drying racks and latrines. From the competition model homes have also emerged that attract the other community members to emulate hence the promotion of good hygiene practices.



HEWASA Case

With the Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) approach as the first step, community members were made aware of the negative effects caused by poor WASH practices, such as open defecation and improper use of latrines at homes. After the triggering exercises, sanitation committees consisted of representatives elected by community members were formed to oversee the progress of WASH activities in the communities.

As a pilot to evaluate the effectiveness of the cluster approach, households in Kajumiro A, Kakinga, and Kanyamukale villages were selected and clustered in groups of 25, with the help of the three sanitation committees. Five clusters were formed based on the distance between houses. In each cluster, a household head was chosen to be the cluster head. The selection was made by cluster members based on exemplary leadership skills and the level of WASH practices in his or her home.

The pilot was very successful in improving the sanitation situation in the clusters. In Kakinga, the following results were achieved:

Table indicating the status of the clusters before and after the intervention

Cluster /zone	HH without a latrine before intervention (out of 25)	HH with a latrine after the intervention(out of 25)	Status in %age
Kayembe	16	25	100%
Nsongya	12	23	92%
Kakinga	17	25	100%

Link local government to households for easy sanitation and hygiene tracking









During the cluster formation, registration is undertaken at village level with focus on households in a given neighbourhood. After identifying the 10 – 25 household units and sensitizing them on WASH. The clusters and their heads are introduced to the local government/ Village governments (e.g. local councillors, parish chiefs, VHTs/CHW and health officers) in the area. The registrar is also given to the local government/village government to enable the local leaders monitor the group activities and support them. The local government/village government plays a vital role in ensuring the clusters adhere to the bylaws including households having latrines, drying racks, tippy taps and soap for hand washing; set by the community with regards to WASH/CLTS. This is done by the local government/village government participating in cluster meetings or calling for the cluster meeting particularly in a cluster zone where WASH/CLTS

rules (relating to the required WASH/CLTS implements including constructing latrines) are being overlooked. It is also attained when the local government / village government make follow up of cluster activities and interventions in relation with the prescribed WASH/CLTS requirements. The approach creates the opportunity for the local government / village government to track hygiene levels at household level, cross examine neighbourhoods that easily backslide after ODF and eases the local government / village government WASH/CLTS surveillance, since the clusters live up to the principle of being their neighbours keeper.

Cluster heads are using a simple monitoring form to track the progress on hygiene and sanitation within the households in their cluster, as shown in figure 2. This can be used by the local government to monitor the progress within a village without having to visit every household individually.

SANITATION AND HYGIENE HOUSEHOLD VILLAGE MONITORING FORM

Village:..... Parish:..... Sub county:..... District:

S/no.	Household Name	 No latrine	 Latrine with no shelter	 Latrine with temporary shelter	 Latrine	 Hand-washing	 Drying rack	 Rubbish pit	 Bath shelter	Comment
1										
2										
3										
4										
5										
6										
7										
8										
Total										

Name of Data collector..... Date..... Signature.....

Name of Chairperson Sanitation Committee/VHT..... Date..... Signature.....

Name of Chairperson LC1 Date..... Signature/Stamp.....

Figure 2: Sanitation and hygiene monitoring form



EMESCO Case

During Local Council meetings cluster champions are allowed to speak on hygiene and sanitation issues. This is done to encourage community members who are not active members of the clusters to freely join the hygiene groups to be able to benefit from the advantages of being part of the cluster. Adoption of hygiene and sanitation recommended practices are much faster in communities where cluster champions are allowed to speak during community meetings. Cell leaders are so much respected by the community members and therefore cluster champions find it much easier to ride on the strength of their leaders.



JESE Case

Community clustering of households is done based on proximity and common household characteristics to monitor and support each other to have basic household sanitation and hygiene facilities and practices. It is employed after CLTS PLUS* triggering sessions. To ensure that the clusters are sustained for long supporting each other to have basic sanitation and hygiene facilities and practices, JESE has trained VHTs to cluster and monitor monthly the progress. The cluster group heads are responsible for reporting the cluster progress to the VHT. The sub county health assistant has been integrated in the system to monitor and guide all clusters in the four target villages surrounding the target schools. This has helped keep track of village performance over time on WASH status up to sub county level.

**CLTS Plus is a practice that entails adding other WASH related practices to the original CLTS fold; including sanitation marketing, sanitation enterprise, waste management and combining hygiene with water access among others.*

Activate household level WASH support mechanisms for sanitation and hygiene as well as social inclusion.

The clusters formed build up a psychosocial structure in which CLTS and WASH can be promoted even after areas are declared open defecation free. In these clusters mechanisms such as joint peer activities, meetings and purposeful task assignments for peer inspection, sensitization and social support are put in place. Where a neighbour is elderly, sick or socially vulnerable, the cluster convenes to act on how best they can help or guide.



HEWASA Case



Kangangye using the tippy tap that was constructed in front of her new latrine

All 25 households at Kayembe constructed latrines and installed washing stations near the latrines due to the cluster effect. For the two neighbours who would have found it hard to meet this target that is a child headed home and an elderly widow; the help of cluster members helped construct them latrines.

I am grateful for the support that the members of this community offered me by constructing a new latrine for me because I am old, weak and not able to construct one on my own,"

said Kangangye, the elderly widow from Kayembe Cluster.

Create sanitation and hygiene pressure groups to advocate for WASH at household level

The Community cluster approach mobilises 10 – 25 household into CLTS/WASH sirens in the community able to urge fellow community member to practice good practices as well as lobby local government for support where need arises. The groups formed within the community comprise of neighbours. Thus a neighbourhood centred method is utilized in which the 10 -25 households per groups are empowered with advocacy skills to promote good WASH practices. They are also encouraged to look out for any WASH inconsistencies that would lead to sanitation related diseases in their homes and neighbourhood.



Kajura putting together materials for the construction of the latrine

Members of Kikinga village women cluster have also been the reason some household in their area have put up toilets and the required hygiene measures. This is achieved through the visits they conduct around the area sensitizing and urging people to improve their hygiene practices.

A notable example of how the women cluster acts as a WASH pressure group in the village is seen in the case of Kajura, a local leader who had not yet constructed a toilet in his home. A cluster group member Margaret had offered some money to Kajura's ailing wife to construct the latrine but her son squandered it. Meanwhile Kajura had no intentions of constructing a latrine because he was not aware of the benefits of having one. A visit paid to his home by the pressure group, HEWASA and Simavi changed his mind. After the visit Kajura constructed a toilet.

Motivate Community members to take lead on WASH initiatives

The community clusters are strengthened with advocacy and life skills to boost their efforts and inspire them to embrace CLTS/WASH initiatives more. Trainings are conducted by the partner organisations on sanitation and hygiene practices (such as making tippy taps, waste management, safe water chain and drying racks), sanitation and hygiene diseases, using waste for manure and briquette making as well as liquid soap processing and initiating saving and soft loans ventures. Income generating initiatives such as those aforementioned are prime in empowering the clusters and the guiding them into a savings and loans process. The loans and savings intervention for the clusters allows them to acquire soft loans not just for improving their livelihoods but also improving their WASH practices since their able to purchase soap, better water containers as well as materials for constructing latrines and racks. Through the loans and saving associations it has also been noted at Kakinga Village, the community clusters are motivated to meet regularly and take action.



Kangangye using the tippy tap that was constructed in front of her new latrine

From a Community Cluster Training conducted by JESE at Kagogo Village, Kyaligonza Robert a Village Health Team volunteer learned how to make liquid soap. Today Kyaligonza who is an active member of the village cluster earns about 40,000/= from 20ltr jerrican which is additional revenue from the general merchandise he sells. He sells 350mls at 500/= and 500mls at 1000/=. Kyaligonza makes a profit of between Sh20, 000 and Sh40, 000 in a good month. To market his products, he sometimes supplies them personally to other neighboring shops and also to schools. One of his marketing tools is advocating for sanitation and hygiene and using the cluster network for reference.

Lessons learned from the Community Clustering Experiences

- + Community clustering encourages good neighbour relations which is advantageous in promoting CLTS and WASH initiatives. They keep the CLTS/WASH conversation alive among neighbours.
- + Community clustering builds a psychosocial structure that nurtures social inclusion and support for the elderly, orphans, sick and disabled in so far as maintaining CLTS/WASH practices
- + Community clusters serves as CLTS/ WASH watchdogs that help prevent backsliding after villages have been declared open defecation free. Community clusters promote sanitation businesses when skilled in WASH related enterprise such as using waste for briquette making and manure, making liquid soap, making slabs among other initiatives
- + Community clusters make WASH monitoring and management easier for local government since the local leaders can track down the cluster members easily and hold them accountable for WASH performance in their area
- + Community clusters are good avenues for championing WASH innovations. The clusters which

focus household levels form good ground for the adoption of WASH innovations such as Ecosan & Fossa Alterna's, improved latrines, water pumps among others. In settings where seeing is believing and people prefer seeing how well a technology or innovation works before adopting it, the clustering approach becomes a suitable means of dissemination of knowledge or scaling up.

- + Through the saving and loans associations in some clusters (e.g. HEWASA – Kakinga cluster) are able to give soft sanitation loans to community members for constructing simple traditional sanitation facilities.

Conclusion

Community Clustering is a zoning specific approach that ensures WASH/CLTS alertness at household level and in the neighbourhoods, which form small units of a given village and community. When applied and inspired with activities into operation, the community clusters become effective in guaranteeing the self-driven continuity of WASH/CLTS efforts in the community. The clusters also ease the work of the local government in monitoring and enforcing WASH/CLTS bylaws that ensure every household has a latrine, washing space, handwashing facility among other WASH implements.

Partners of the WASH & Learn Programme



JESE is an indigenous non-government, service-providing organization registered as a company by guarantee. Since its establishment in 1993, JESE, through her work in improved Agriculture Production and Natural Resources Management and long term development, has greatly contributed to improved livelihoods of target beneficiaries and provided opportunities for a better life especially for the rural poor households and communities. For more information visit www.jese.org/



HEWASA (Health through Water and Sanitation) Programme is one of the major social services and economic development programmes of the Catholic Diocese of Fort Portal. For over 20 years now, HEWASA has implemented a number of integrated community and school Water Sanitation and Hygiene and nutrition projects that include; WASH infrastructure development that covers bore-holes, protected springs, shallow wells, rain water harvesting tanks, gravity flow schemes, school latrines, and washrooms and Menstrual Health among others.



CABDA (Community Asset Building and Development Asset) (Community Asset Building and Development Asset) is a non-profit making organization that transforms the lives of majority rural poor from communities that are disadvantaged and marginalized in Western and Nyanza regions in Kenya through strong and committed leadership with community service at heart. It began on a Christian foundation way back in 2005 through one-person initiative but currently has 19 staff and over 1,000 community volunteers in rural communities all over Kakamega, Busia, Vihiga counties and parts of Nyanza region. To achieve its goals, CABDA is pegged on the following pillars; Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), Orphans Vulnerable Children and Caregivers support (OVCs), community empowerment through Self-Help Group Approach (SHG) and Community Development Project (CDP), Health promotion through Global Fund Malaria Project. For more information, visit www.cabdakenya.org.



UFUNDIKO is Swahili abbreviation which means Ufundi na Uhandisi Kongwa which means in English Kongwa Technical Development Association. The organization registered on 5th April, 2005 under Non-Government Organization Act, 2002 to work in Tanzania mainland. Currently UFUNDIKO implement its development programmes in Dodoma region. The core functions of UFUNDIKO are Water supply, Hygiene sanitation, Nutrition, Environment and Natural Resources Conservation and Community capacity development. Cross cutting issues such as HIV/AIDS, Gender, and Good Governance are also considered in all UFUNDIKO development programmes.



TDFT Tabora Development Foundation Trust (TDFT) is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving standard of living of rural population in Tanzania. The Organization has four main programs, which are as follows; Health improvement – Water, Sanitation & Hygiene promotion & HIV/AIDS, Malaria, Food Security - Livestock Development & Agro-forestry Program, Child Rights – Elimination of child labour & support of most vulnerable children and Lobby & Advocacy Programs. For More Information, visit tdft.or.tz/.



EMESCO Development Foundation (EDF) is a reputable local pro-poor development organization based and operational in Kibaale, Kakumiro and Kagadi Districts in Mid-Western Uganda. EDF is duly incorporated as a Company Limited By Guarantee and Not Having a Share Capital according to the laws of Uganda and for that matter it is a not-for-profit development organization. Emesco Development Foundation is very active and well experienced in implementing rural development programmes in three principal sectors namely; Sustainable Agriculture, Community Health and Water and Sanitation. For more information, contact <https://emesco.org.ug/>

