

SANITATION MARKETING AND VILLAGE SAVING AND LOAN ASSOCIATIONS: MADAGASCAR

SANITATION MARKETING

Along with behavioral change, improving sanitation and handwashing facilities plays a significant role in maintaining Open Defecation Free (ODF) status and preventing slippage (the return to open defecation). Sanitation marketing provides consumers with access to options for improving their sanitation using commercial marketing approaches. Sanitation marketing that supports and values local and affordable solutions, technologies, materials and skills emerging from the communities for improving latrines enhances the adoption of improved sanitation. Conversely, imposing externally developed technologies for improving sanitation on communities can result in expensive maintenance and increase the risk of people abandoning their toilet facilities and going back to open defecation. As an example, households are encouraged to spread cement mortar over latrine slabs made of soil or wood to make them easier to clean and more durable. Facilitators “trigger” communities to improve their sanitation and handwashing facilities, for instance by showing an eroding mud slab. The community will then realize that the unimproved latrines will deteriorate and the consumers will end up going back to open defecation and ingesting feces. Once triggered, the community members develop an action plan that includes identifying materials and local technologies to be purchased, and local volunteers responsible for the upgrade.



Point of sale

Sanitation marketing consists of the following steps:

- Identify strategic sites
- Advocate to local authorities
- Research the local market (products, price, place, promotion)
- Trigger key influencers in strategic sites: Local Technicians, Natural Leaders, Community Champions
- Train local technicians on low-cost technologies, and establish a local distribution network
- Monitor the transformation of ODF villages into villages with improved latrines and handwashing facilities.
- Use local communication methods and media (posters, leaflets, etc.)
- Scale up to other locations

Success story: Sanitation marketing in Ampitabe village in Madagascar

The MCDI program in Madagascar (2010-2020), Fond d'Appui pour l'Assainissement (FAA), aims to eliminate open defecation with “Zero Subsidy” for sanitation and handwashing facilities. Once the village of Ampitambe, under the FAA Programme, reached ODF status in February 2014, community members changed the defecation zones into crop fields, used flyproof latrines (with lids) and washed their hands at critical moments with soap or ash. However, such behavior change does not ensure that ODF status will be sustained in the village.

The village community of Ampitambe was able to move from basic to improved latrines by implementing the following sanitation marketing strategies:

- Triggering of local authorities and obtaining their support.
- Triggering communities to change their basic latrines to improved ones by using local methods and materials of their choice.
- Training local technicians to construct improved latrines.
- Following up to ensure product availability, and to support local technicians in setting up at least one local point of sale of sanitation products.

Sanitation marketing is a source of employment. Gilbert was only a simple farmer but since his village's triggering he became a local sanitation technician and he testifies, "I am proud to be a local technician, I make a contribution to our village, I earn money to support my family, and I am starting to be known in the surrounding villages".

Maintaining ODF status is a major challenge that requires Sanitation Marketing as well as the involvement of local authorities and community members.

How can communities afford sanitation and handwashing facilities?

A Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA), or in Malgasy 'Vondron'Olona An-toerana miara-MANao tahiry and Mlfampindram-bola' (VOAMAMI), is a group of 15 to 25 people who save money and give small loans to its members from these savings. VSLA activities normally operate in one-year cycles, after which accumulated savings are distributed among members in proportion to their contributions. The main objective of VOAMAMI is to provide local credit to facilitate the acquisition of improved sanitation infrastructure for its members.

At monthly meetings, association members buy between one and five shares, whose value is determined by the members and stays constant through the year. Also, during each meeting, members can borrow from their savings. All VSLA transactions are made in front of members during meetings to ensure management transparency. Each member has an account book, which is kept with the association's money in a safe box. The keys to the box are held by three members of the association. Information about purchase of shares, loans, and balances of the Credit Funds is available at each meeting. VSLA saving is essential for the FAA program's sustainability because it allows the communities to purchase sanitation and handwashing facilities with their own funds, preventing them from returning to open defecation.



VOAMAMI meeting in Madagascar



Célestine

Success story: Célestine

After losing her husband, it was difficult for Célestine to support the daily needs of her daughter: food, clothing, and school fees. The acquisition of an improved latrine was not a priority for her. To meet her daily challenges, Célestine joined a VSLA group in her village in 2015. A few months later, she was able to improve her daily life thanks to loans from VSLA. "I am a widow and raised by myself my only daughter. During the meetings of VOAMAMI, the members teach me, help me when I need money, and give me advice on income-generating activities; I feel fulfilled. Thanks to VOAMAMI, I was able to pay my daughter's school fees and four years later, she became a teacher; also, I got a latrine with washable slab six months after joining the group VOAMAMI".



To learn more about MCDI, please visit:
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