

- Credit scheme helps families to build household toilets
- Sanitation markets offer range of affordable options
- Handwashing with soap more widely practised

A quarter of all deaths in children under the age of five in Ghana are attributable to diarrhoeal diseases linked to polluted water and poor hygiene. Only one in eight families can access a basic hygienic toilet and many people defecate in gutters or streams, or behind a bush.

The Dutch WASH Alliance¹ is supporting NGOs in northern Ghana to improve health and prevent disease. The Alliance is backing the Community Life Improvement Programme (CLIP) and the New Energy Consortium to champion sanitation, clean water and good personal hygiene in and around Tamale, one of the fastest growing cities in West Africa and the capital of Ghana's Northern Region.

Partnerships strengthen community efforts

CLIP is raising awareness of the benefits of safe sanitation and clean water, working with local partners in 32 urban and peri-urban communities to stimulate

¹ WASH is the acronym for water, sanitation and hygiene.

Working together

The Dutch WASH Alliance is a consortium of Dutch NGOs working towards a society in which everybody has sustainable access to clean water and hygienic sanitation. Amref Flying Doctors, Simavi, Akvo, ICCO, RAIN and WASTE co-ordinate work with partners in developing countries to increase the effectiveness of their programmes and learn together.

The Dutch WASH Alliance is financially backed by the Dutch government. In Ghana, Simavi supports the New Energy Consortium² and WASTE supports the Community Life Improvement Programme (CLIP)³.

people to construct and use their own toilets and practise good personal hygiene.

The New Energy Consortium also promotes the construction of toilets and trains volunteers to champion sanitation and good hygiene in 33 communities. Since 2011 they have been supported by the Dutch WASH Alliance.

² The New Energy Consortium includes GYAM, AFORD Foundation, SlimliAid and Presby Water

³ CLIP Partners include Presbyterian Cooperative Credit Union, Tamale Metropolitan Assembly, Urbanet, Zoom Lion and DeCo



Children fetching unhygienic water at the outskirts of Tamale. IRC.

CLIP and the New Energy Consortium have developed networks of support for communities and local businesses, training volunteers to form Community Sanitation Development Committees, to champion the use of sanitation, clean water and good hygiene, and promoting a credit scheme to enable households to construct their own latrines.

As an active partner, the Dutch WASH Alliance has supported CLIP and the New Energy Consortium with finance, technical support and training resulting in significant advances in the number of toilets constructed and a decline in open defecation. The consortia are learning from what they achieve and strengthening local organisations to ensure a sustainable system that will continue after the programme ends.

Learning to respond to people's needs

Action Research for Learning

Action-Research for Learning is a three year initiative (2013-2015) to improve the effectiveness of hygiene promotion and community empowerment projects implemented by Dutch WASH Alliance partners in Ethiopia, Bangladesh, Ghana and Uganda. The programme is funded by the Dutch WASH Alliance with financial support from the Dutch government.

One significant contribution from the Dutch WASH Alliance is the Action-Research for Learning project to support NGOs to learn from what they are doing and improve their programmes.

CLIP and the New Energy consortium have enlisted the help of community members to collect information about the impact of their activities, and have learnt to analyse this information to improve their programmes. They ask: *Are we achieving our objectives? What can we do to improve? What is missing?*

CLIP – finance and choice to increase sanitation options

Realising that communities needed better information about sanitation, CLIP established six sanitation markets showcasing toilet options from a US\$ 39 low-cost pit latrines to a US\$ 75 flush water closet.

Materials for each option are also listed to encourage families to select the toilet that suits them best, rather than simply buying on price.

Community Sanitation Development Committees manage these markets, promote the benefits of household toilets and demonstrate good hygiene practices. CLIP has trained local people to construct the toilets, lowering the costs and providing an income for the builders.



Pour flush latrines, Ghana. Ibrahim Abdul-Ganiyu
<http://washalliance.akvoapp.org/en/project/351/update/2883/>



Pit latrine, Ghana. Ibrahim A. Ganiyu
<http://washalliance.akvoapp.org/en/project/351/update/2304/>



Sanitation Market at Kobilmahagu Community in the Tamale south sub-metropolis. CLIP

As many families cannot afford a toilet, CLIP asked the Presbyterian Cooperative Credit Union in Tamale to design and launch credit products for poor households to join a savings groups. The Credit Union offers loans with a 3% interest rate to finance the cost of materials and labour. With monthly payments ranging from 30 Ghana Cedi (US\$ 7) to 600 Ghana Cedi (US\$ 137), a household repays the loan over a six month period. More than 100 households have already made use of these loans to construct their own toilets.

In the most crowded parts of Tamale, where there is little space to develop household toilets, public toilets play a vital role. A CLIP survey as part of Action Research for Learning showed that people are unwilling to use poorly maintained and dirty public facilities, and they found privately managed toilets to be cleaner and better managed. CLIP persuaded the local authority to lease 15 state managed public toilets for private management in the Tamale area with the result that use of public toilets has increased.

Surveys undertaken as part of Action-Research for Learning show that almost all community members now wash their hands with soap after defecation. Environmental cleanliness has also improved, with 90% of community members using bins to collect household waste, compared with 65% of households in 2013.



Woman storing water at Duyin, Ghana. John Bibirim,
 AFORD <http://rsr.akvo.org/en/project/462/update/4259/>

New Energy Consortium tackling social obstacles to change

The New Energy Consortium has also been able to strengthen its programme through Action-Research for Learning. In rural areas the number of toilets has increased and open defecation has reduced since 2013. Hygiene has improved with more people washing their hands with soap before cooking, after defecation and before feeding a baby. Drinking water is handled more safely as people cover water containers and clean them every three days. Soakaways have been constructed to lead dirty water away from the house.

The consortium is working with district Environmental Health Officers and Community Sanitation Development Committees to encourage communities to protect themselves from diseases. Some peri-urban communities have held back from constructing household toilets in the hope that the district government will provide public toilets as they have done in more urban areas. The New Energy consortium in cooperation with Community Sanitation Development Committees and the Environmental Health Officers explain that toilets are a household responsibility and will not be provided by local government. To not defecate in the open the community members could at least start as first action to dig holes and bury their faeces if they have no access to a toilet. However, information collected through 'Action-Research for Learning' shows that many people believe this is too difficult, especially in the dry season

when the ground is very hard. Although the community is difficult to convince, the New Energy consortium continued its efforts to have them change their behavior on defecation and other actions to tackle the underlying motives for not adjusting behavior were developed.

The New Energy Consortium is working with the district government, and village chiefs, where they exist, to bring communities together to draw up and agree on bye-laws. These may impose penalties on people who defecate in the open or oblige people to carry a hoe when going to defecate so they can practise 'dig and bury'.

Research has also shown that some latrines are unsuitable for children under the age of six. The consortium is now promoting toilets which are more child-friendly.

More information

Akvo, 2015. Sanitation Portal. http://akvopedia.org/wiki/Sanitation_Portal

IRC, 2015. Action-Research for Learning with Dutch WASH Alliance. [project page]. IRC. <http://www.ircwash.org/projects/action-research-learning-dutch-wash-alliance>

SHARE, 2013. Microfinance for sanitation: evaluating experiences, learning from lessons.

[http://www.sharesearch.org/Page/Detail/markets#Microfinance for sanitation: evaluating experiences, learning from lessons](http://www.sharesearch.org/Page/Detail/markets#Microfinance%20for%20sanitation%3A%20evaluating%20experiences%2C%20learning%20from%20lessons)

WASH Alliance International, 2015. Ghana. <http://www.washalliance.nl/local-alliances/ghana/>

Credits

This story has been produced (2015) for the Dutch WASH Alliance by Jeske Verhoeven of IRC in cooperation with Waste, CLIP and partners and with Simavi and New Energy and partners.

Action-Research for Learning is supported by the Dutch WASH Alliance in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Uganda, and Ghana. You can read about other successful projects supported by the Dutch WASH Alliance in Bangladesh, Ghana, Uganda at www.washalliance.nl/learn-more/downloads.

This work by IRC is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 License.

