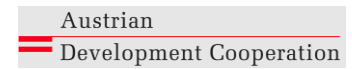




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THE USE OF THE HOUSEHOLD ASSESSMENT BOOK (HAB) IN THE DISTRICTS OF GULU, KITGUM AND PADER, NORTHERN UGANDA

February 2012

Introduction

This documentation on the use of the Household Assessment book (HAB) in Northern Uganda was prepared under the PILS¹ project, and is aimed at the Ministry of Health (MoH), Environmental Health Department, members of the National Sanitation Working group and the three Districts of Acholi Sub region. It details the status and use of the HAB in the Districts of Gulu, Kitgum and Pader. It analyses what the HAB book is, what happened to it in the three districts since it has been distributed, highlights some gaps and proposes a way forward.

Background

IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre, Network for Water and Sanitation Uganda (NETWAS) and Caritas Gulu have been implementing from 2009-2012 a two and half year project in Gulu, Kitgum and Pader called Performance Improvement through Learning on Sanitation (PILS). PILS is a District and Sub-County-based Learning and Action-Research initiative aiming for increased performance, innovation and change in rural households' and schools'

sanitation and hygiene. This is done through the facilitation of multi-stakeholder platforms (or learning sessions, action research and capacity building.

During the multi-stakeholder platforms in the three Districts of Gulu, Kitgum and Pader in 2011, it was revealed that the household assessment books developed by the ministry of Health, which would have improved data collection at household level, were not being used and many officers had no records of the books in the District. During the inter-district sessions attended by TSU members, they reported to have handed over the books to the District Water departments. This inconsistency and actions taken after the discussions at the multi-stakeholder platforms prompted us to write this note for all the concerned stakeholders.

What is the Household Assessment Book (HAB)?

The HAB is a data collection tool for households on sanitation and hygiene. It comprises two books: the first is a household data collection tool that is designed to collect information about household sanitation, hygiene and access to safe water. It mainly covers indicators on the household latrine, drying rack, main house, kitchen with vents for smoke, rubbish pit, bathroom, hand washing facilities and access to clean drinking water. A picture of the household data collection book is shown below.

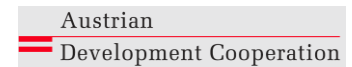
¹ Performance improvement through learning in sanitation (a two year project implemented in Acholi Sub region).



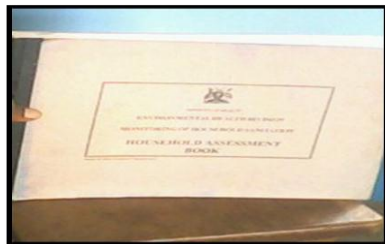
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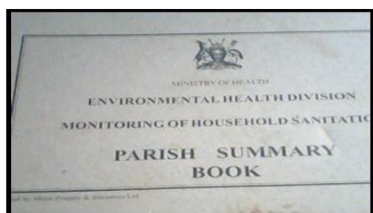
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The second book is a data collection tool at parish level that uses information collected from the households. This information is then analysed to give data per village which is summarised according to parishes. A picture of it is shown below.



History of the Book

According to Mr. Justine Otai, the Senior Health Educator at the Ministry of Health, the HAB was produced, printed and distributed by The Environmental Health Division of the Ministry of Health (MoH), and distributed with the help of Technical Support Units (TSUs). It was designed in 2002, when the first 100 copies were distributed. Full national massive distribution was realised in 2004.

The use of the book

The book was designed by the Ministry of Health with the main objective being to

collect Environmental Health information right from household level for analysis,

Book 1 (the household data collection too) is used in the villages by VHTs. And book 2:(the summary book for parish level data) is used for summarising village information at parish levels.

It was designed in a way that data would be collected at village level by VHTs; this information is then summarised by their peer supervisors at the Parish levels. The Parish level information is then forwarded to the Sub-County for compilation and use. The Sub-County also forwards this information to the District for planning and resources allocation. This information is then sent to the national level database.

What happened to the books since the distribution to the three Districts of Gulu, Kitgum and Pader?

During the multi-stakeholder learning sessions organised at District and Inter-District levels in 2011 under the PILS project, it was discovered that the Districts did not know about the HAB book that had been distributed by the Ministry, even though TSU records showed that they had indeed been delivered to the District water officers. This generated a discussion during the Inter-District session and commitments were made by the Districts to find the books and distribute them to the Sub-Counties.

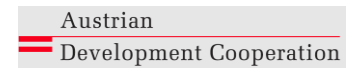
Gulu District had developed their own parallel data collection tools that were being used for data collection and analysis. The



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tool did not include all the indicators in the HAB. After the discussion at the inter-district session, the participants agreed to adopt and distribute the HAB book.

- Although the books were found and distributed to all the Sub-Counties and at parish level, the village level books were not found and not distributed
- The Sub-County staff and some VHTs at parish levels were oriented on the use of the book
- There is still a challenge for most VHTs and the extension staff to adopt the HAB. They claim the book is bulky and they were already used to their data collection tools
- It was also reported during the inter-district session that the various NGOs working in the sector in Gulu District all use different tools for data collection and analysis.

In Pader District, Concern Worldwide was supporting the district in developing a data collection tool for sanitation and hygiene in 2011. When the existence of the HAB was revealed and discussed during the Inter-District learning platform:

- TSU reported to have given copies of the HAB to the District water department
- The District Officials in attendance at this platform committed themselves to finding the books and put them to use
- The DHI, during the sixth district learning platform in February 2012,

reported to have found only 5 copies in the District. A Health assistant from Adilang Sub-County reported to be in possession of one copy he found in the Sub-County

- The Health Assistant (HA) of Adilang also reported to have used the book in 2011 to train the VHTs on what information to collect. VHT members then bring the raw data to him and he fills it in the HAB
- NGOs such as Caritas and Concern volunteered to support the District with some stationery for photocopying the book for wider distribution to the Sub-Counties.
- Another NGO, ZOA, agreed to work with the District to translate the book into the local language (Luo).

In Kitgum District, there was no unified tool developed for data collection. When the discussion was conducted at the inter-district platform, all the District officials reported not to have received or seen the book. It was during a district Platform in 2011 that the books were discovered in the resource center of the District water department.

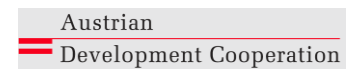
- The District Health Inspector (DHI) took charge and distributed the books to all Sub-Counties. At the moment, all the Sub-Counties, parishes and villages have received the book
- The HAs were trained on how to use the HAB and they eventually guided and briefed the VHTs



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- During our last District learning platform in February 2012, data had been collected using the book, although it had not yet been analysed.

not cover (for example) detailed information on safe water chains; it focuses mainly on sanitation facilities.

What are the remaining gaps?

- Few books: Of the three Districts, only Kitgum has enough books for both villages and Sub-Counties. In Gulu, books could only be distributed to the Sub-Counties and not to villages. In Pader, the DHI had only five copies that were distributed to 2 Sub-Counties and 1 NGO in the sector
- Language & understanding: The books are in English and some VHTs have difficulties in filling them in. In Kitgum Matidi, it was reported that some VHTs sought assistance from their colleagues or from school children. This sometimes results in inaccurate data collection
- Perceived relevance and usefulness of the collected indicators: Most information collected is based on the indicators used by the Ministry: some of the collected information is actually not needed for use by the Sub-Counties, Districts or NGOs. This led some NGOs such as Zoa in Pader to develop a summarised version of the HAB book
- Form focusing on the presence of facilities rather than on water and hygiene behaviour: The form does

Proposed way forward

These recommendations and ways forward were developed by line department Officials from Gulu, Kitgum and Pader Districts during interviews conducted with selected officials.

(1) The Ministry of Health

- The MoH could allow for translation of the HAB into various local languages for easy use by the VHTs
- There is a need to make more copies of the book for adequate distribution to parishes and villages, especially for Pader District
- The Ministry could also evaluate the use of the books and the relevance of the content, especially regarding water-related information.

(2) The Districts

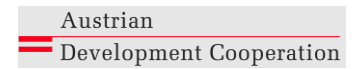
- Translation of the books into local language (Luo) would help the VHTs to use the books more comfortably
- Districts need to allocate budget and collaborate with other stakeholders in the sector to on one hand make more copies of the HAB, and on the other hand to improve data collection, especially in Pader and Gulu Districts



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- The HAB should be shared with NGOs implementing sanitation and hygiene programmes, with the aim to standardise data collection
- Extension workers should be sensitised to support and use the HAB, especially in Gulu District
- District should allocate resources for data collection and analysis at the Sub-County levels.

(3)The NGOs

- NGOs could help support the Districts for the translation of the HAB into local language
- They could also contribute resources to facilitate printing of more books
- NGOs can play an important role in supporting the Sub-County extension workers and VHTs in the collection and updating of relevant data which can also be used by all sector actors
- The NGOs need to support and use the information from the HAB and not develop their own data collection tools.

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