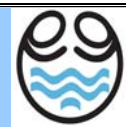


RWSSP: Technical Advisory Note 2.5 Water & Sanitation Reduces Poverty.



Introduction

This TAN attempts to explain how poverty reduction can occur through water and sanitation. Improved water supplies can lead to an economic upturn at the household level. Individual tariffs help to support community management of regular maintenance, as opposed to resorting to emergency or latent fund-raising to effect repairs. Individuals that also adopt changes in hygiene behaviour will additionally reduce recurring medical expenses. Both explanations of these will conclude that simultaneous earnings and savings may reduce poverty significantly enough to empower bread-winners and future earners in families the opportunity to improve their lives, and this is as a direct result of water and sanitation.

Maintenance earns money!

A simple objective of improving a water supply is to make 'water use' easier and quicker, and this has an immediate impact on rural life. At the very minimum, there will be a reduced workload for women and children. A simple outcome may be that children's school attendance improves. It can be assumed that women will find more productive activities with which to spend their spare time. Apart from maybe more time to be with children or house cleaning activities, there is opportunity to engage in financial gain driven activities such as gardening and produce selling. Therefore, the importance of maintaining the water supply at its newest state is beneficial to the household as a potential earning opportunity. The guaranteed way of ensuring this, is for households to commit to and pay a regular small tariff, at an agreed interval to suit the community or household economy.

Better hygiene behaviour saves money!

Less illness will lead to less medical expenses. The whole purpose of improving sanitation and adopting hygiene behavioural change is to improve health. Put very simply, 50% or more of the more regularly experienced illnesses at the rural household level, can be prevented by following some rudimentary hygiene rules. These include washing hands after defecation, using latrines and keeping them clean, storing water correctly, containing garbage and preventing pooling of water. Whilst medical expenses reduce as a result of reduced illnesses, time spent attending to sick

relatives and visiting the health workers also reduces. Therefore, adopting behavioural change is beneficial to households as a potential money saver and earner.

How the NSA can make it happen!

The NSA can facilitate the passing on of these simple explanations to the community during the planning stages using simple PRA tools such as pictures with arrows or the problem tree. This can also be reinforced to individuals at the household level throughout and after the project. Additionally it is vital to provide separate training on community management with which to ensure accountable and transparent financial management, and technical operation and maintenance training. It cannot be emphasised enough the importance of selecting permanent residents who will become committee members and technical caretakers. Gender awareness activities might suggest to the community that women can be pivotal in managing maintenance on behalf of the community. Maintenance training compliments health-hygiene education / promotion activities such as CLTS and PHAST, as they are all profitable.

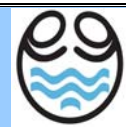
Book-keeping

A ledger that is kept updated by a committee member, will provide transparent evidence of individual contributions, and agreed expenses such as spare parts, labour, transport and infrastructure development. Receipts of all transactions can be recorded in the ledger and kept in a special file. The ledger need only have four columns to denote the date, the transaction, and whether the monies are entered or

Maintenance and Better Hygiene Behaviour affects household income

Table examining approximate activities and expenses per week for rural women, before and after water supply installation, and the differences in time and money spent in relation to tariffs for maintenance.

RWSSP: Technical Advisory Note 2.5 Water & Sanitation Reduces Poverty.



Women's general activities & expenses	Weekly time and money	
	pre-water supply	post -water supply
Household chores (hrs/week)	21	21
Water-use (hrs/week)	21	10.5
Sickness (hrs/week)	11	5.5
Work (hrs/week)	28	44
Earnings from gardening (k1/hr)	+28	+44
Recurring medical expenses (K-)	-10	-5
Maintenance tariffs (K-)	0	-5
Other expenses	-18	-18
Profit	0	+16

In this example, the maintained water supply reduces the time spent using the water by half, the hygiene behaviour reduces the time and cost by half, resulting in 16hrs extra work time and associated earnings.

Concluding Comments

Sustainable water supplies are profitable because they allow more productive time for women and children. Tariffs are just one simple but extremely important element of many ways in which to ensure sustainability. Adopting better hygiene practice will additionally provide savings on recurring medical costs.



This programme is funded by the European Union