

Introduction

WaterAid and its partners promote water, sanitation and hygiene as an integrated programme to achieve the highest health benefits for the deprived people in society. The provision of any one of these three may not necessarily solve the problem of helping the deprived people to obtain the intended health benefits.

During programme implementation, WaterAid partners encounter a number of challenges from the field. These challenges then provide learning opportunities and opportunities to innovate.

This document presents a simple but very useful innovation by a WaterAid-supported partner organisation, the Afram Plains Development Organisation (APDO). It is intended to promote learning and sharing of Programme innovations and experiences in the water and sanitation sector.

APDO's Sanitation Market A simple but useful innovation

A WaterAid Ghana briefing paper - 2004 - No 3



Background

Sanitation promotion so far in WaterAid Ghana Programme has emphasized on household and institutional latrines for safe disposal of human excreta. Some of the partners also promote the use of 'soak away' pits for safe drainage of household effluent, while APDO has recently introduced rubbish dumps in the Afram Plains. The Programme emphasizes on promoting and supporting communities to access and use these sanitation facilities. This is in line with its integrated water, sanitation and hygiene promotion strategy of improving the health and living conditions of the deprived people in society.

Field challenges

Many deprived rural and urban communities lack access to latrine facilities and resort to various unorthodox means of responding to nature's call – mainly through open defecation. In trying to promote the use of household latrines in rural communities, field workers find it difficult to describe how the various latrines look like in structure, importance and other attributes. This makes the work quite difficult and limits the interest of the intended beneficiaries in the whole process since to many people across the world, "seeing is believing."

The concept of "sanitation markets"

With lessons from the challenge of trying to verbally explain and describe various types of latrines to community members, the Afram Plains Development Organisation came up with an innovation – the concept of 'Sanitation Market' in 2003. The concept was simply to set up a center that would facilitate the marketing process of latrine promotion. The center then is seen as a market place for various latrine options where people would visit, view and choose from among several options based on feasibility and affordability among others. The sanitation market is therefore linked with the hygiene promotion programme.

Strategy

Before the sanitation market was established, APDO field staff used to describe various types of latrines verbally, sketched on the ground, papers, boards and other means. This was tedious and sometimes ineffective. The following methods have therefore been introduced at the 'sanitation market:'

The movable prototypes

These prototypes have been displayed at the Head Office of the organization. Visitors who see them and are attracted usually ask questions and officers from APDO are always ready to provide the answers. They are made of wood in the shape of all the various types of latrines (see page 3) that APDO promotes – both sub and superstructures.

Demonstration latrines and refuse dumps

In addition to the movable wooden prototypes that do not really bring out all the necessary pictures of the latrines, APDO has constructed real demonstration

latrines near the Head Office, where people visit for proper orientation. Here, all the questions ranging from price, durability, sustainability, and options are asked and answers provided by office staff. There is also a demonstration refuse dump pit with roof (This refuse dump is yet to be piloted) in communities. "Soak away pits have also been piloted in some communities and are serving as models for others to acquire. The idea is that APDO wants to diversify sanitation promotion and reduce the over-emphasis on human excreta disposal. The refuse dump will control refuse disposal while the soak away pits control wastewater disposal.

APDO is also experimenting the use of local materials other than cement for lining latrine pits in order to minimize cost.

Marketing

While field staffs visit communities either to follow up on on-going projects or enter new communities, they show photographs of all the options and also direct people to where the 'market' is located. Tuesday for instance is a 'market day' so when people attend the market, they visit the APDO office and officials then send them to the 'market' and answer all their questions.

Application for latrines

After making their choice, households then fill application forms with support from their Water and Sanitation Committee (WATSAN) members and submit through the WATSAN Committee to APDO. Applicants are supposed to provide or bear the cost of Land and Bricks for the superstructure, Excavation, Sand, Gravels, Stones, Door frame and Roofing materials.

APDO would then bear the cost of Cement, Iron rods, Vent pipe, Vent screen and , Artisan

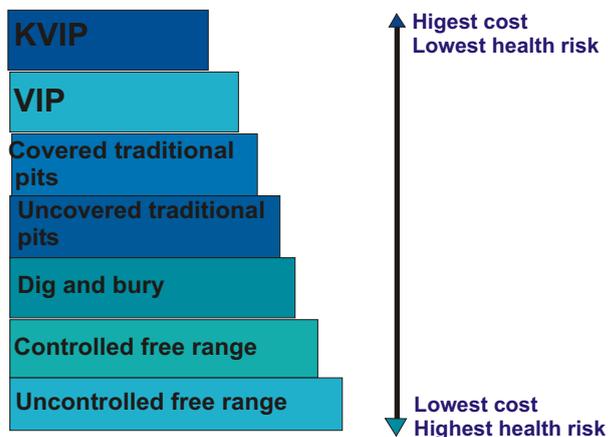
Market guides and the sanitation ladder

Even though there is a coordinator in charge of the market, all the staff members at the Head Office have been trained to guide visitors into the sanitation market. They are therefore always ready to take visitors to the market and help them to make choices. They know all the various models and their cost and other implications and leave the prospective buyer to make a choice.

They also provide advisory services to those who need advice. For instance they would advise on whether there is the need to line or not to line a latrine within a particular soil structure. Where the soil is very hard there may not be the need to line since it will not cave in. In the same way, they would advise the necessity to line where the soil is not hard enough to prevent collapse of the sub structure etc.

The guides normally use the sanitation ladder as the tool for guiding visitors to the market. The ladder ranks all the various latrine options including open defecation. The guide would therefore highlight all the benefits, risks and cost implications of each option.

The diagramme on page three depicts the sanitation ladder: the risk and cost implications.



The sanitation ladder depicting cost and health risk ranks with each choice.

The higher you move up the ladder the lower the risk and vice versa. When the options are turned upside down, the cost implications would be shown. Therefore the lower the health risks the higher the cost of that option.

Frequency

So far the market has been quite 'vibrant.' On the average about ten people visit the market every week. These are mainly people from communities where field staff have visited and spoken about the center. Other visitors to the office for other purposes who see the movable prototypes and express interest are also taken to the demonstration center.

Impacts

The impact on the demand for latrines has been a visible rise in recent times. For instance an average of 10 people visit the market every week and they ask questions on the various options. When convinced the next step is to apply for their choice.

Constraints

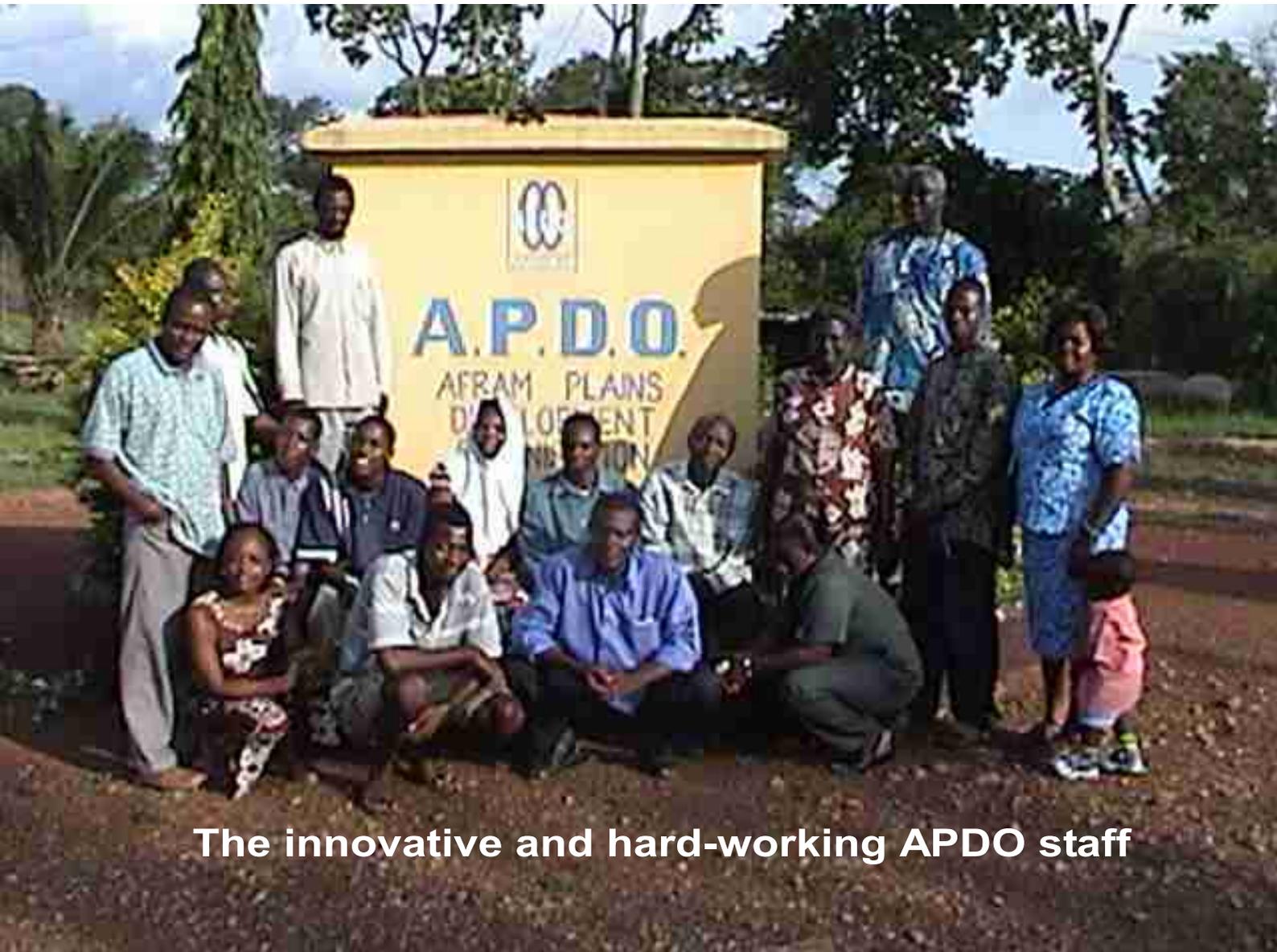
At the beneficiary level, the distance from many communities to the 'market' is a big problem. The district is really big and the location at the moment is Tease. People therefore find it very difficult to visit the market as the sole reason for visiting Tease. They mainly prefer using market days and other occasions. This has limited the expected number of visits to the center.

At the organizational level, financial constraints and limited staff have been the main limiting factors for responding to the corresponding increase in demand ever since the project started.

Future plans

APDO intends to expand the market to all the four zones of the district where the organization has offices. This, when accomplished, will bring the market closer to the people.





The innovative and hard-working APDO staff

For further information, contact

**The Country Representative,
WaterAid Ghana
Box 16185 - KIA, Accra**

Tel: 760440

E-Mail: info@wateraidghana.org

OR

**The Executive Director
APDO**

Box 93, Donkorkrom, Afram Plains - ER

Tel:0848 - 22029

E-mail: apdo@africaonline.com.gh