Sustainable Sanitation & Hygiene For All (SSH4A)

Improving Sanitation and Hygiene for All – the SSH4A journey 2014 - 2020

Sustainable Sanitation and Hygiene for All (SSH4A) is SNV’s largest results-based programme to date. The six year programme (April 2014 – March 2020) impacted the lives of over 1.8 million Ugandans, contributing to ending open defecation practices, improving sanitation and increasing the number of people practicing hand washing with soap. The programme was implemented in nine countries across Asia and Africa, including Uganda. The first phase of the UKaid funded programme ran from 2014 to 2018 covering 15 districts in Uganda. In 2018, the programme was extended until March 2020 and focused on 33 sub counties in 9 districts within West Nile (Pakwach and Zombo) and the Rwenzori Region (Kibaale, Kagadi, Kakumiro, Mubende, Kassanda, Kyegegwa and Kyenjojo).

Problem Statement

Uganda is committed to attaining Open Defecation Free (ODF) status by 2030, in line with the UN Sustainable Development agenda. In rural areas however, access to sanitation has stagnated at 77%, while only 17% use improved toilet facilities that aren’t shared.

Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) is the most promoted and used approach to achieve ODF in Uganda. While the CLTS approach is good in triggering communities to take action, the approach has limitations in sustaining results over time.

Furthermore, scaling of CLTS is conceived as simply doing more of the same. Given other competing demands at Local Government level, allocating resources for follow-up after triggering and first gains is challenging. This made attaining and sustaining area-wide sanitation improvements difficult.

SSH4A Approach

The programme is built on four pillars to meet the needs of the entire population and ensure that No one is left behind.

1. Demand creation
   Strengthen the capacity of local governments and partners to spearhead sanitation and hygiene initiatives to generate demand for quality sanitation services in communities.

2. Sanitation supply chains and finance
   Develop appropriate, affordable market-based sanitation solutions that address the needs of various customer segments.

3. Behavioural Change Communication (BCC)
   Deliver hygiene promotion tailored to the local context and desired hygiene behaviours.

4. WASH Governance
   Improve sector alignment and coordination of sanitation and hygiene initiatives, and address needs and aspirations of typically disadvantaged groups – girls and women, the poor, people with disabilities and the elderly by applying a consistent gender equality and social inclusion approach.

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SSH4A integrated approach

Sustainable Sanitation and Hygiene for All (SSH4A) is SNV’s integrated rural sanitation approach to strengthen the capacity of local authorities to develop and enforce area-wide sanitation service delivery models within their jurisdiction. The programme recognized the importance of anchoring sanitation and hygiene interventions at the local community as well as government level. The district and sub-county local governments were therefore put at the center to enable them plan, implement, monitor sanitation and hygiene interventions and sustain results achieved.

The SSH4A programme was built on four pillars; demand creation, supply chain, behaviour change and governance to meet the needs of the entire population and ensure that no one is left behind. CLTS was thus a key approach used to create demand and trigger behaviour change, but only in combination with the governance and supply chain focus did SSH4A become a successful approach!

SSH4A performance monitoring

Since SSH4A was a results-based funded programme, effective monitoring was critical to verify project results. The programme used the Akvo FLOW mobile phone software to ensure efficient gathering and verification of data. The programme was measured on two main categories of performance indicators: outcome and sustainability. Sustainability measurement in SSH4A was complex and included aspects of local government and local partners capacity, sector alignment, social inclusion and progress on Faecal Sludge Management (FSM), among others.

SSH4A programme results

In 2019, an endline household survey was conducted to measure progress against the outcome indicators as compared to the 2016 baseline results. These are the highlights under the three SSH4A outcomes:

- **Outcome Indicators**
  - Increase access to and sustained use of sanitation facilities.
  - Promote hygienic use and maintenance of sanitation facilities.
  - Increase access to handwashing stations with soap.

**Conclusion**

Substantial improvements were made in all outcome and sustainability indicators. This was achieved due to the commitment and support of District, lower local governments and local partners. These were put at the center of implementation. Developing and implementing district specific Behaviour Change Communication strategies and engaging the private sector were some of the other success factors. However, it should be recognized that continuous effort is needed to avoid relapse. This can be achieved through making available resources at national and at local government levels for continued progress towards 100% access and sustained behaviour change.

The SSH4A programme has demonstrated that a well-thought through strategy and diverse workforce can deliver results without subsidising households.

Sustainability highlights and potential:

- **Private sector engagement** in sales of hardware and service provision to the community members has made sanitation and hygiene improvements more accessible and affordable.
- **Women participated** for instance; in leading triggering sessions, implementing and monitoring improvements in their household clusters. With this knowledge and experience they can sustain the initiatives.
  - Local governments are likely to sustain results since their capacity has been improved and they have the necessary tools for follow up.
  - A quantitative sustainability survey has shown that the slippage is low in the first phase districts.
- **Rural Growth Centers (RGCs)** have rural features but “different sanitation challenges” such as markets, institutions, dense populations among others. The SSH4A approach is applicable for RGCs and in refugee / hosting community context.

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More information about the SSH4A project
https://snv.org/project/sustainable-sanitation-hygiene-all-results-programme

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