



Performance Improvement through Learning on Sanitation - PILS

A project funded by



KTGUM DISTRICT LOCAL GOVERNMENT

March 2012

'TE CWA': A RADIO PROGRAMME THAT PROMOTED SANITATION IN AKWANG SUB COUNTY, KITGUM DISTRICT

INTRODUCTION

The Performance Improvement through Learning in Sanitation (PILS) project was implemented in Northern Uganda for two and a half years by IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre, NETWAS Uganda and Caritas Gulu Archdiocese. The initiative used multi-stakeholder learning meetings / platforms and action research to improve sanitation and hygiene in the three Districts of Gulu, Kitgum and Pader. The stakeholder platforms involved local NGOs, politicians, technocrats and media companies. During this period, Kitgum District established a partnership with the media to promote hygiene and sanitation in the District, including in Akwang Sub County.

This case study examines the processes and results / impact of the involvement of local media on the improvement of sanitation and Hygiene in Akwang Sub County during this period.

BACKGROUND OF THE INITIATIVE

'Te Cwa' is a local word that means 'under the Tamarind tree'. This describes the set-up of the radio programme that mainly deals with discussions on local problems by community members.

The participatory radio programme is designed by the Mighty Fire FM radio, which is operating in Kitgum District. The aim of the programme is

to increase community participation in the discussion of various development issues.

A typical 'Te Cwa' radio programme consists of a meeting of community members to discuss community issues under a tree; this is recorded and aired on the radio every week.

During the PILS project, representatives from the Mighty Fire FM station were invited and participated in the multi-stakeholder learning platforms, during which they shared experiences from this programme. Akwang Sub County officials saw the opportunity for using the programme to discuss sanitation issues and the outbreak of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) related diseases in the Sub County.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INITIATIVE

A 'Te Cwa' radio programme was recorded in Pali Village, through the following process:

- The Health Assistant of Akwang Sub County approached the District Health Inspector (DHI) to request permission to use the Mighty Fire FM programme to increase awareness on sanitation and hygiene in her Sub County.
- The Office of the DHI then convened a meeting that included Caritas staff, Mighty Fire FM representatives and the Health Assistant of Akwang SC. They discussed the proposal and agreed to conduct the activity.
- Pali Village in Lugwar parish, which had the lowest sanitation coverage in the Sub County, was selected and a date was agreed upon. The LCI chairman was



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informed and mobilised community members for the meeting.

- On the agreed date, community members gathered and the Health Assistant explained the purpose of the meeting. A chairman for the discussions was selected among the community members.
- Discussions were held on the reasons for the low sanitation coverage and outbreak of related diseases such as diarrhoea and cholera in the area. Through these discussions, awareness was created and the community members planned a way forward to increase the sanitation coverage.
- These discussions were recorded by Mighty Fire FM staff and later aired on radio for sensitisation purposes.
- The LCs, Village Health Teams (VHTs) and all the local leaders joined efforts to follow up at household level and ensure that the sanitation coverage increased.

MAJOR DRIVERS OF THE PROCESS AND SUCCESSES

The reasons for the success of the initiative included the following:

- There was support from the management of the radio station Mighty Fire FM, who offered a free radio spot programme for sanitation and hygiene issues.
- Caritas supported the process which gave a boost to the Sub County.

- The DHI together with the Health Assistant worked together in the sensitisation process.
- The LCI of Pali village together with his executives followed up to ensure that the sanitation coverage increases.
- Community members felt motivated by their new knowledge and realised that they could reduce the diseases related to poor sanitation by building latrines and using them.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- The latrine coverage increased from 18% to 37%.
- Sanitation and hygiene related diseases were reduced to about 48%, according to the records of the Health Assistant.
- Increased awareness and knowledge of hygiene and sanitation were attained in the parish.

RESOURCES REQUIRED

- The Sub County spent money on transport for mobilisation of participants and follow up.
- The radio station provided airtime estimated at a value of UGX 600,000 (US\$ 239)
- The LCs and VHTs did some follow up among community members to ensure they built latrines and their hygiene behaviours improved.



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LESSONS LEARNT

This experience generated a number of lessons:

- Sensitisation processes for the rural poor should engage them and allow them to share their own views and feelings. A radio programme such as 'Te Cwa' can allow this. Any promotion campaign on sanitation and hygiene should be spearheaded by the communities themselves.
- Follow up within the communities by the local leaders and VHTs is crucial for the success of such a campaign.
- A Sub County can partner with the private sector to provide services to people. Until now, the Sub County local governments have been maintaining its relationships with the private sector on a purely contractual basis, but this can be done differently.

Produced by Esther Piracel, PILS documentation Officer Netwas Uganda, piracele@yahoo.com

For more details about this case, contact

Amony Pamela
Health Assistant – Akwang Sub County
Tel No.: +256-782-635397

For more information about PILS, contact

IRC

René van Lieshout
lieshout@irc.nl
www.irc.nl

NETWAS

Daniel Mwesige
netwasuganda@gmail.com
Phone: +256-414-577463
www.netwasuganda.org

CARITAS

Charles Owiny Okello
owinyix@yahoo.co.uk