



Poor access to adequate sanitation, resulting in the practice of widespread open defecation, has negative health and social impacts on communities, particularly in terms of diseases such as diarrhoea and cholera. Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) involves facilitating a process to inspire and empower rural communities to stop open defecation and to build and use latrines, without offering external subsidies to purchase hardware such as pans and pipes. Also it is a valuable tool to create demand for sanitation services in communities. As a consequence, the Dutch WASH Alliance considers CLTS to be an effective method to create access to WASH forever.

### Sense of disgust

CLTS is a sanitation promotion based on stimulating a collective sense of disgust and shame among community members as they confront the crude facts about mass open defecation and its negative impacts on the entire community. The basic assumption is that no human being can stay unmoved once they have learned that they are ingesting other people's faeces. Generally communities react strongly and immediately try to find ways to change this through their own effort based on different motivations.

### How to CLTS yourself? Follow this seven-step approach:

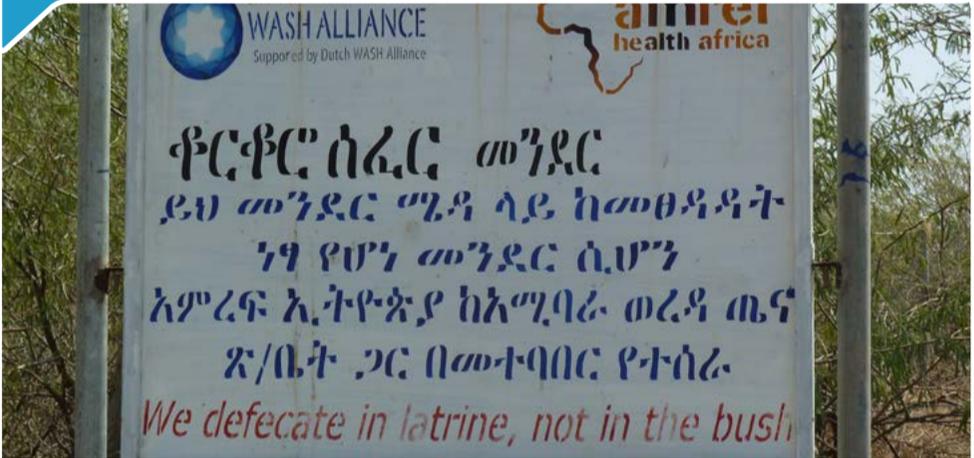
- 1 Execute a transect walk through the village to find out where the villagers defecate and fetch water.
- 2 Map the village together with the community, indicating the open defecation spots and water fetching places.
- 3 Ask people from the community to drink a glass of water, after putting some faeces of the open defecation area in the glass. Of course they won't.
- 4 Tell them that actually they do the same every day, by defecating in the open and allowing the faeces to mix with their drinking water.
- 5 Suggest to start building latrines, once the community is convinced that they should not continue their practice of open defecation.
- 6 Motivate early adopters to convince their peer villagers to also build and use latrines. The problem will only be solved if nobody defecates in the open anymore.
- 7 Declaring the village officially Open Defecation Free (ODF) once all villagers have built a latrine that they actually use.

After a village has been declared ODF, sustainable usage of the latrines always remains a challenge. Villagers see the disease rates drop and consider their problems solved. They might even think that they do not need to use the latrines anymore and start to drop out. To avoid this, regular refresher meetings should be held.

\* These seven steps are based on existing Community Led Total Sanitation guidelines and are not developed by the Dutch WASH Alliance.

### Subsidy-free

CLTS involves no subsidy. Subsidy only induces an attitude of external expectation and dependence. Neither does CLTS prescribe latrine models. Rather, it encourages the initiative and capacity of the community. The aim is to ignite and encourage a self-motivated desire to change behaviour.



### Different motivations

Realise that different community members have different motivations for wanting to change the status quo. For example:

- Families who do own toilets discover that they are just as prone to faecal-oral contamination due to the actions of those who don't
- Landless people are often criticised and abused for defecating in other people's land
- Women and young girls suffer the most from the lack of privacy in open defecation
- Religious leaders realise the meaninglessness of wearing clean clothes as they are dirtied by human excreta

## DO

- Facilitate a good analysis that ignites a sense of disgust and shame.
- Let people realise and work out things for themselves.
- Let people innovate simple latrines.
- Hand over to local leaders. Encourage them to share their ideas with the whole community.
- Trigger self-mobilisation through good facilitation.
- Involve children in the discussion and ask them what they would do.

## DON'T

- Lecture or educate the community, the element of disgust is the central element of CLST.
- Tell people what is good and bad.
- Offer hardware subsidy.
- Promote particular latrine designs.
- Be in charge and push for, or demand action.
- Avoid the defecation areas, but rather spend as much time there.

Do you think this approach could work in your project area? And do you want to learn more about CLTS? Contact us: [www.washalliance.nl](http://www.washalliance.nl)

