



ENDING OPEN DEFECACTION IN SAHEL: SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES OF A PILOT PROJECT COMBINING CLTS WITH SOCIAL ART

THE CASE OF THE ECED-SAHEL PROJECT IN BURKINA FASO

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SUMMARY

This article highlights the extent to which Community-Led Total Sanitation and Social Art for Behaviour Change™ (SABC) are complementary approaches to ending open defecation (OD), under the Water and Sustainable Economic Growth in the Sahel (ECED-Sahel) Project, implemented from 2016 to 2019 by CowaterSogema International and co-financed by Global Affairs Canada (GAC), the IAMGOLD mining company and the One Drop Foundation.¹

The experience documented in this article has contributed to nearly 21,500 people in the communes of Gorom-Gorom and Falagountou - located in the heart of the Sahel region of Burkina Faso - stopping the practice of open defecation thanks to the construction of 1,118 latrines and 588 sumps in their households, 35 blocs of community latrines, as well as a campaign promoting the proper use of individual and community latrines that reached 63,440 people, including 3,600 students from 10 schools.

The taboos surrounding open defecation and its alternatives, exacerbated by growing insecurity in the region, were identified as the main risk factor in engaging communities in behavioural change. To address this risk, the CLTS and SABC approaches were implemented. The complementarity of both approaches is demonstrated in a continuum of interventions to support communities in a sustainable behaviour change process, starting with the establishment of conditions that encourage the practice and reinforcement of desired behaviours. The success factors acknowledged include the empowerment of priority groups from the outset, emotional grounding to trigger commitment, and collective intelligence as a catalyst for sustainable action.

BACKGROUND OF THE ECED-SAHEL PROJECT

Water, Hygiene and Sanitation (WASH) is a complex focus area since it is surrounded by many taboos. More specifically, in the sanitation area, achieving a goal as bold as completely abandoning open defecation requires more than just building or renovating latrines. Hygiene and the adoption of sound practices must be prioritized. As such, how can the promotion and adoption of new behaviours be addressed to ensure sustainable change among communities that practise open defecation? This is the behaviour change challenge that the team working on the ECED-Sahel Project decided to address.

ECED-Sahel, which was implemented from 2016 to 2019 by the implementing agency CowaterSogema International and was co-financed by Global Affairs Canada (GAC), the IAMGOLD mining company and the One Drop Foundation, aimed to support sustainable economic growth in the Sahel region by using water as a lever for development in the areas of sanitation, supporting income-generating activities, promoting gender equality and reinforcing local governance. The project was implemented in the communes of Gorom-Gorom and Falagountou where access to hygiene and sanitation is low. Open defecation was in fact common practice among a population totalling 63,440 people.

Against this backdrop, the CLTS approach was implemented from the start of the project to make people understand why it was imperative to put an end to open defecation and build latrines to protect their health and well-being. With the support of the ECED-Sahel Project, this approach led to communities building numerous sanitation facilities in households and schools.

¹*Social Art for Behaviour Change* is a trademark owned by One Drop Foundation.

FINDINGS

Despite the efforts deployed by the project's outreach and hygiene educators to raise awareness and reinforce the impact of CLTS activities focused on healthy WASH practices, a number of issues were identified in 2017, a year after the implementation started:

- poor use and inadequate maintenance of latrines;
- continued practice of open defecation;
- disregard for handwashing with soap at critical times²;

When questioned by the project's stakeholders, latrine owners identified specific barriers to stopping open defecation and adopting healthy WASH behaviours:

- pleasure of defecating in the open rather than the discomfort of being confined in a metal sheet house;
- misuse of latrines (how to aim for the hole for example);
- perceived risk during use (especially the fear of falling in the hole if the slab gives way);
- inadequate maintenance of the latrines (which produces unpleasant odours);
- poor understanding of contamination pathways;
- low perceived severity of not washing hands after using latrines or before eating;

Based on these observations of poor practices and the persistence of barriers to the adoption of the desired behaviours, ECED-Sahel deemed it necessary to find an effective strategy to reach people in other ways. With the accompaniment of the One Drop Foundation, and the technical support of Espace Culturel Gambidi, the Social Art for Behaviour Change approach (SABC) was mainstreamed into the ECED-Sahel Project. The SABC approach had to be synergized with CLTS activities in order to stimulate the engagement of priority groups, reinforce WASH messaging and respond to the need to address the psychosocial determinants of the desired behaviours.

COMMUNITY-LED TOTAL SANITATION - WHAT IS IT ABOUT?

Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) is a participatory approach used to challenge people on their open defecation practices.³ Through various impact-oriented activities (village tours, mapping of defecation areas, participatory determination and analysis of impacts, etc.), CLTS elicits a sense of disgust that pushes people to equip themselves--even without any subsidies--with sanitation facilities, from the most basic to the most elaborate.⁴ In the rural areas of Falagountou and Gorom-Gorom, people have limited financial resources, which means they often opt for rudimentary constructions.

²*Critical times*: after using the latrine, menstrual hygiene or caring for a baby (diaper or potty), before preparing a meal, eating or breastfeeding a baby.

³*Manuel de l'ATPC*, Kamal Kar et Robert Chambers, 2008 [available online] : https://www.communityledtotalsanitation.org/sites/communityledtotalsanitation.org/files/media/Manuel_ATPC.pdf

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 9



Latrine construction

CLTS is a two-step process:

- **Triggering awareness and commitment:** First and foremost, CLTS leads to collective awareness and a commitment to ending open defecation.
- **Construction of latrines:** Secondly, the community decides to build latrines for itself and uses all the means available to them to do so.

SOCIAL ART FOR BEHAVIOUR CHANGE - WHAT IS IT ABOUT?

Social art is an artistic and creative process performed in collaboration with individuals, groups and society to facilitate positive transformation.⁵ Therefore, social art is not about disseminating awareness-raising messages designed “for” priority groups; it is a user-friendly platform where messaging and art works are produced “with” these groups.



Theatre-debate show

In this perspective, the Social Art for Behaviour Change (SABC) approach developed by the One Drop Foundation and implemented through ECED-Sahel with the technical support of Espace Culturel Gambidi, seeks to involve communities as key players in their own behaviour change process and the adoption of healthy WASH behaviours.

To this end, the SABC approach taps into the local artistic and cultural potential to engage communities, especially leaders of change, in a participatory process where artistic experience (theatre, radio dramas, murals, image sets, stories, song, dance, etc.) serves as a vehicle for jointly constructing behaviour change messages.⁶

SABC combines the power of social art with the rigour of behavioural science. Its participatory artistic and creative process, which is nurtured by quantitative and qualitative data from formative research, elicits strongly positive emotions (pleasure, pride, sense of belonging, etc.) among priority groups and focuses on WASH behaviours by

⁵Social Art: Iterative Definition (January 2019), [Available online]: <https://www.asawiki.com/index.php/quest-ce-que-lart-social/>

⁶In One Drop-funded projects, "change leaders" refers to individuals emerging from the community who act as role models and drivers of change. They can come from both the influencers' group and the priority group.

addressing the barriers and motivators associated with their adoption and maintenance. Behaviour change is more successful when it is supported and boosted by actions jointly designed with various actors (artists, hygienists, teachers, entrepreneurs, priority groups and influencers) and when it is rooted in the emotions, experiences and culture of the groups targeted by these actions.

More than just raising awareness through information sharing, the SABC approach seeks to support - or even boost - behaviour change. To this end, it deploys three types of intervention aimed to **Inspire**, **Activate** and **Sustain** behaviour change (see Figure 1 below for SABC Cycles and behaviour change process).

Inspire

In ECED-Sahel, theatre-debate **shows** for the general public and storytelling as close-proximity interventions have inspired more than 34,438 people.

In school settings, sketches, stories and murals inspired more than 3,600 students and their families, and reinforced messages on the use and maintenance of latrines and washing hands with soap and water at critical moments.

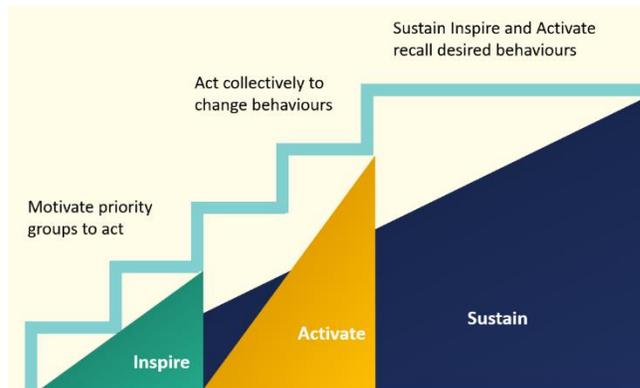


Figure 2: SABC Cycles and behaviour change process

Activate

24 artists and facilitators, 2 animators and 64 hygienists were trained in social art to strengthen interventions within their communities.

48 teachers, pedagogical advisors and district education chiefs were trained in social art as a way to engage students in a process of change. 3,600 students actively participated in art and education **workshops** to address WASH behaviours within the school, and together they produced sketches, stories and murals, which they then presented to their peers and loved ones.

Sustain

SABC **intervention tools** were created and made accessible to change leaders: an educational guide for art and education workshops, radio drama capsules for mass media broadcast and close-proximity interventions (broadcast on a cell phone connected to a Bluetooth speaker).

This intervention material enabled leaders of change (artists, facilitators, animators, hygienists and teachers) to inspire the population and recall the desired WASH behaviours.

COMPLEMENTARITY OF THE CLTS AND SABC APPROACHES IN ECED-SAHEL

As with any behaviour change process, the adoption and maintenance of healthy WASH behaviours requires a consistent sequence of actions. This continued and repeated messaging is exactly where the CLTS and SABC approaches come together to end open defecation.



CLTS trigger activity with images toolbox

In the targeted communes of Falagountou and Gorom-Gorom, CLTS activities designed to trigger behaviour change were conducted jointly by several actors, each playing a key role. Firstly, to facilitate initial contact with communities, the communal authorities and village development councils paved the way through a communication campaign aimed at getting the support of the customary and religious authorities as well as community members in each village to become involved in future CLTS activities. This campaign, which was followed in close succession by the CLTS triggering activity, was a catalyst for the population’s support of the sanitation project and sparked their commitment to the construction of 1,706 household sanitary facilities and 35 blocs of community latrines.

While the construction of the latrines was in full swing, SABC activities were introduced to boost the adoption of good WASH practices by leveraging the data collected. Under the artistic and pedagogical direction of Espace Culturel Gambidi, which relied on One Drop’s support and technical reinforcement, about 20 artists and role-players from the targeted communities designed two theatre-debate shows, radio dramas and storytelling performances to address the use and maintenance of latrines and handwashing with soap and water at critical times, with a touch of humour and in local languages (Fulfulde, Tamasheq, Sonrhai and French⁷). The planning and implementation of the campaign to disseminate the SABC interventions was articulated by the SABC team in close collaboration with community leaders (Village Development Council, and customary and religious authorities).

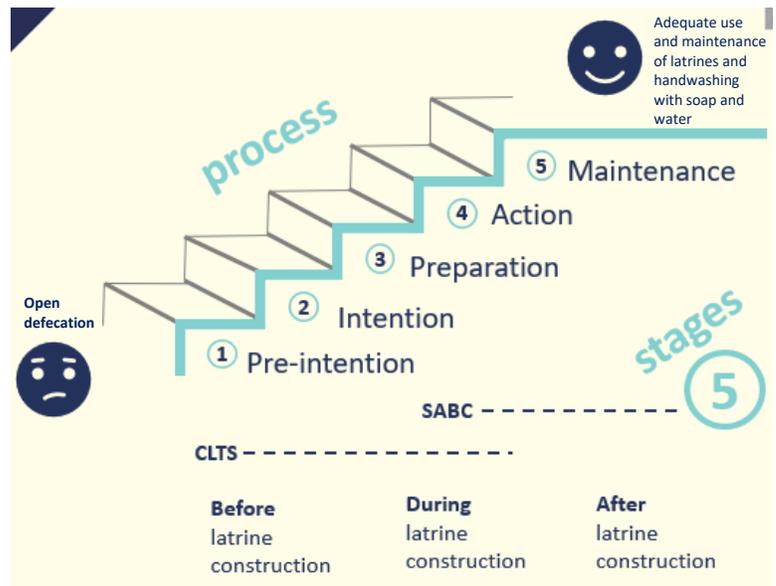


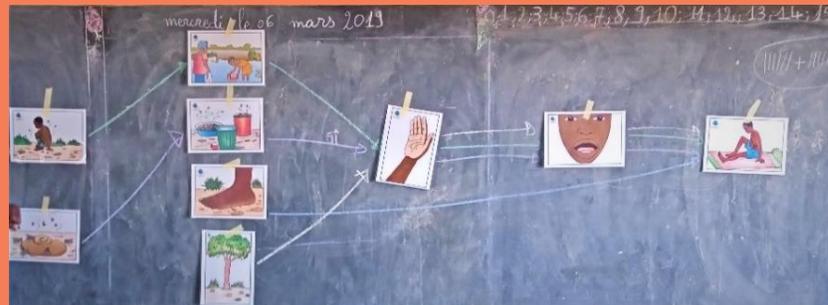
Figure 2: CLTS+SABC and behaviour change stages

⁷Only the radio spots have been translated into French.

To deploy CLTS and SABC in schools alongside activities conducted in household and community settings, basic education district chiefs helped identify 10 schools where gender-sensitive sanitation facilities could be built.

They also facilitated the selection of teachers who would be part of the process and receive SABC training to address desired WASH behaviours in their schools and homes.

Thus, while blocks of gender-sensitive latrines were being prepared in the 10 selected schools, 48 teachers, curriculum advisors and basic education district chiefs were trained by professional artists from Espace Culturel Gambidi in the practice of social art with students, and more specifically to address desired WASH behaviours. The training was focused on adopting a range of tools for behaviour change design, artistic pedagogy for children and youth, drama, acting and debating.



Chain of contamination illustrated with images toolbox



Trigger in school surroundings



School surroundings after trigger

Once the sanitary blocks were completed, School Health Clubs (SHC), with six members (three girls and three boys) each, were set up to ensure that latrines, hygiene and sanitation in the school environment were properly managed. Students, supervising teachers and members of the Parent Association were trained by a consultant with expertise in the field.

As a result, 3,600 students participated in discussions with the SHC and in art and education workshops, after which they jointly produced - despite their ethnic differences - a series of murals, stories and sketches to promote the desired WASH behaviours.

Thus, while the CLTS approach promotes ending open defecation, the SABC approach, as a complementary strategy, promotes the adoption of healthy and sustainable WASH behaviours. Thanks to repeated and consistent messaging from local leaders and the two approaches, the population of Falagountou and Gorom-Gorom has become aware of the need to end the practice of OAD, built latrines and embraced the use and maintenance of these facilities, as well as handwashing with soap and water at critical times.



Mural about the use and maintenance of latrines

SUCCESS FACTORS

PRIORITY GROUPS AS THE PROTAGONISTS OF THE INTERVENTION FROM THE OUTSET

In their interventions, the CLTS and SABC approaches share one core value: the priority groups are the protagonists of their own behaviour change. To encourage this active engagement, the leaders of these groups were involved, from the very beginning, in the design of the interventions and, along the way, the priority groups themselves also participated.

LOCAL LEADERS

Within the ECED-Sahel Project, the priority groups' involvement forced the project team to interact with the leaders from the beginning of the activity design stage and throughout the entire process to understand the realities of the communities, their culture and expectations, and to design and adapt the proposed WASH interventions. Close collaboration with these leaders and their enhanced role as influencers - or even role models - proved to be a guarantee of the population's support for the sanitation project in general and behavioural change in particular.

In fact, in addition to facilitating access to the communities of the two communes, the village leaders handled the practical organization and communication around interventions. As for religious leaders, they drew on Islamic values and beliefs to support personal and residential hygiene messaging. Some of them also took part in SABC activities to create a ripple effect.

CHANGE LEADERS

The change leaders, who come from the priority groups, but also from influencers, are an important driving force in behaviour change: they are artists, debate facilitators, hygiene educators, facilitators or teachers. Hailing from a culture where men and women act in accordance with gender-segregated roles, members of the SABC troops developed a collaborative mindset among women and men, learning to work together and to draw on each other's strengths and knowledge.

For example, the two arts troops, which were made up of community members and trained to promote desired behaviours, were mixed, with an equal parity of 12 women and 12 men. In addition, male/female duos of facilitators managed the debate following the SABC artistic triggers (shows targeting the general public, radio spots, storytelling, and so on). This gender-based approach created a framework for cooperation between women and men, from the design of artistic actions to their live performance or radio broadcast. This collaboration helped harness each other's knowledge and skills and created a positive correlation between the sexes, acting as examples and even role models for the villagers. The same complicity between women and men was manifest among the hygienists, facilitators, teachers and at the very heart of the SHC.



**Debate co-animated by a woman-man duo
with Maiga Fatimata and Maiga Hassane Moukouba**

The active involvement of women in the conversation around taboo behaviours, in the exploration of new possible views through artistic representation, and decision-making processes has enabled them to overcome timidity and to express themselves freely about taboos that constitute obstacles to adopting good hygiene and sanitation practices. For example, during the performances, the gender roles revisited created a different perception of the roles that women and men play. Specifically, the SABC approach has helped raise the profile of men who help their wives and contribute to the maintenance of the family latrine and has also encouraged men to become more involved in providing their families with the means necessary for better hygiene practices.

Therefore, from a gender perspective and the leadership of the priority groups in their own change, the SABC interventions followed a progressive design which was shaped by the change leaders themselves. Thanks to the key conversations triggered by CLTS approach, women, men and students contributed, through their questions, comments and recommendations, to the progressive design of their own personal change. No strategy, other than that of progressively producing interventions that responded to the specificities and emerging needs of the priority groups and change leaders, was designed in advance and applied as is.

EMOTIONAL GROUNDING AS A TRIGGER FOR ENGAGEMENT

In behaviour change, the emotional trigger - whether negative or positive - is crucial. The participatory SABC process is a vehicle for learning, a meaningful experience that allows people to break with certain practices and consciously adopt new, healthier behaviours, while remaining consistent with their values.

AN ENGAGING EXPERIENCE

While the impact-driven CLTS approach elicited disgust to break the community's open defecation habits, the SABC approach was rooted in strong positive emotions such as joy and pride to stimulate adherence to and promotion of desired behaviours by creating a ripple effect.



Illustration of open defecation

Each stage of the participatory creation of the SABC approach and its outreach within communities was implemented as a special opportunity for exchange, debate, engagement and collective action. The objective was to produce cumulative and positive effects on the community, i.e., psychosocial conditions conducive to the adoption and maintenance of new behaviours. These conditions include the development of psychosocial skills⁸ such as self-esteem, empathy, self-confidence and interpersonal trust, self-efficacy, a sense of belonging, and collaboration.

For example, [Fatimata⁹, an artist, facilitator and entrepreneur involved in the project, despite contempt from other women from her village, took part in SABC interventions and gradually became a positive role model and leader for change in her community.](#)

LOCAL CULTURE AND VALUES

To ensure every SABC intervention emotionally reaches the priority groups, the ECED-Sahel team needed to tap into important cultural assets (e.g. the use of gombé and locally made traditional guitars), socio-cultural and religious values related to hygiene and family protection in the communities, their habits (customary, dress, typical ways of greeting or making conversation, etc.) and also their taboos.

For example, in the play *Seul contre tous!* [One against all!] about the use and proper maintenance of the family latrine, Salif, the main character, embodies an unusual model that challenges the social norm that a husband should

⁸"The Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (World Health Organization, 1986), the Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989 (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 1989), the World Declaration on Education for All (World Conference on Education for All, Jomtien, 1990), and the Framework for Action adopted at the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000 (World Education Forum, 2000) all identify skills development or "life skills" as a relevant strategy for making healthy choices and living together." **Institut national de santé publique du Québec, *Pour des interventions intégrées et efficaces de promotion et prévention en contexte scolaire*, p. 9-10 : [Available online], https://www.inspq.qc.ca/pdf/publications/1789_Interventions_Integrees_Contexte_Scolaire.pdf**

⁹Fondation One Drop, Rapport d'impact 2018, p. 22-23 : [available online] https://www.onedrop.org/workspace/uploads/files/rapport_impact_2018.pdf

not engage in the maintenance of the family latrine, since this is a chore reserved for women. The strong disapproving reaction of Salif's friends highlights this taboo and triggers, after the performance, a debate about what male-female collaboration could be like.

ADAPTABILITY TO REALITIES

To reach priority groups in a security context that makes travelling between villages and hosting large public events more complex, “**close-proximity interventions**” have replaced general public events as a means of reaching out to priority groups. A **close-proximity intervention** consists in a visit to a family concession through a SABC intervention (radio spot or storytelling) followed by a discussion session mediated by facilitators and an educational session with hygienists using a set of images to illustrate desired behaviours. These interventions are supported by a small multidisciplinary team in a safer closed environment.



Scene of theatre-debate with Maiga Hassane Moukaila, Maiga Hadjira Soumana, Maiga Haoua Seyboun and Maiga Aissetou Idrissa

The unexpected effect of this type of intervention was the sharing of significant information from the priority groups, thereby contributing to continuous review and improvement of SABC interventions. Below are two testimonials:

Mr. Maiga Moussa, a sexagenarian from the village of Débééré Doumam, in the commune of Gorom-Gorom, said he liked this approach because it helped him better understand messages about healthy WASH behaviours. He took the opportunity to point out that performances aimed at the general public are good, but often fail to reach older men like him who refrain from going to listen to the messages since audiences are usually made up of women, adolescents and children.

Mr. Hamidou Boureima said: “Thank you for your close-proximity approach, which shows your interest in the well-being of our community. As far as I know, none of you (speaking of artists) is from Doumam, in Gorom-Gorom Commune, but you have accepted to take the time to raise awareness about hygiene and sanitation issues. This is a commendable act; may God bless you. Furthermore, I would like to make a suggestion to you: please keep making pictures such as the ones you are holding (talking about the picture set) that depict the right behaviours to be adopted. These images could be taped on the doors of our latrines, at the water points. This would allow us to systematically remember the right behaviours to be adopted”.

Finally, the radio spots reinforced the messages conveyed by the other SABC interventions in order to reach a total of 34,438 people through repetition.

COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE AS A CATALYST FOR SUSTAINABLE ACTION

Once the priority groups and their leaders are playing a leadership behaviour change role, and the artistic triggers have captured their emotions, depicted various facets of their experiences, and highlighted certain taboos, the stage is set for a constructive debate and collective reflection to engage in the implementation of healthy and sustainable solutions.

Both the CLTS and SABC approaches are based on the values of popular education and collective intelligence within which reality is re/constructed through the interrelation of various outlooks on a given reality. In the specific context of this project, the team, was able, by working with communities, to develop innovative approaches to collectively design interventions that make it possible to better reach and support communities at each stage of the behaviour change process.

THE DEBATE STAGE

With the SABC approach, the debate stage is set by artistic triggers that connect discussions with the emotions and experiences of the participants¹⁰. The discussions seek to bring together individual interests and collective well-being.^{11 12} This way, taboos related to open defecation and the use and maintenance of latrines emerge, as well as possible solutions to be implemented.

This type of discussion engages community members in the adoption of sound WASH practices that have marked the ECED-Sahel project process. For example:

During a discussion following a thematic show on the use and regular maintenance of latrines, Mrs. Maiga Hafissata, a resident of the village of Gomo, Falagountou Commune, made it clear that she was unaware that latrines must be regularly looked after or would become a source of disease. She pledged to take care of her latrine from then on, in the same way she takes care of her house.

¹⁰Boal, Augusto, *Le théâtre de l'opprimé, La Découverte, Réédition 2007*

¹¹Guerre, Yves, *Le théâtre-forum. Pour une pédagogie de la citoyenneté*. Paris, L'Harmattan, 1998

¹²Barus-Michel, Jacqueline, Enriquez, Eugène et Lévy, André, *Vocabulaire de psychosociologie, positions et références*, Érès 2002, p. 108

The debate stage is a special opportunity for interaction that invites community members to reflect together on their WASH practices as well as their causes and effects. For example:

During a debate following a thematic show on handwashing with soap, Mr. Dicko Issaka, resident of the village of Gaigou, Gorom-Gorom Commune, said: “One can see that there are more women than men in the village because a lot of men have died. About 3 out of 10 women are widows”. He suggested that men’s causes of death could be due to ignorance of certain behaviours such as washing hands with soap before eating or after using the latrines. He, therefore, urged women to take care to make soap available by regularly letting the men know when soap is missing in order to reduce the mortality rate in the community in general and among men in particular.

While the participatory process is the experiential vehicle for both the CLTS and SABC approaches, debates are uniquely perceived as the pivot for behavioural change. Whether such debate takes place in public, during a home visit or right in the middle of a SHC, it helps groups to understand the local reality behind some of their inadequate WASH practices, target the barriers and motivators related to the healthy behaviours they wish to adopt, capture their current needs and, eventually, transform social norms. For example:

During a community awareness-raising activity in the village of Ekeou, Falagountou Commune, a 70-year-old man said: “If we don’t use latrines, it’s because we feel ashamed to go in there since everyone will know that you went there to poop or pee”. When asked what was more shameful, hiding in the house to relieve oneself or getting caught in the bush doing so, he conceded that using the latrine was less shameful.

CONVINCE OR ENGAGE?

The debate stage is used to examine a reality, anchor it into experience and emotions, analyze the situation and identify possible solutions. Why? Because behaviour change starts with an informed choice made by the people themselves.

Change leaders, including facilitators, hygienists, teachers and SHC members have been trained in the art of staging a debate. Nevertheless, there has been a propensity for preserving the art of persuasion within the debate stage itself. It is as if traditional education had created a bias and conditioned the search for a single, predefined answer or the quest for “the” right solution.

WASH interventions face many taboos. If the intervention tries to persuade participants that using a latrine is the best way to take care of one’s family, it could trigger resistance instead of adherence and engagement in the collective actions deployed. The key factor in a commitment is a conscious decision to take action. And this choice belongs to the participants.

Also, unlike the art of persuasion, the art of debating requires weighing several perspectives and skill sets to better represent the issue at hand, think collectively, build potential solutions together, and commit publicly to putting them into practice. Change leaders thus need a paradigm shift, i.e., giving up the mechanisms of persuasion directed towards adopting a single solution in order to opt for the practice of collective intelligence.

And this paradigm shift requires sustained support for facilitators and change leaders.

CONCLUSION

The ECED-Sahel experience has made it possible to explore the complementarity of CLTS and SABC approaches. These are two approaches that share the common goal of achieving sustainable adoption of good hygiene and sanitation practices. The pilot project was monitored using an interactive platform and household surveys. Main findings are the following:

1. At the beginning of the project, in February 2016, the analysis of open defecation within communities in the project area was submitted.
2. At the end of 2018, 36% of the latrines built were not being properly maintained, i.e. 18 months into the implementation of the CLTS approach.
3. At the end of the project, i.e., in late November 2019, after 30 months of a complementary implementation of the two approaches, the project's intervention made it possible to radically change the communities' health environment.
 - 21,500 people, representing 41% of the population of the communes of Gorom-Gorom and Falagountou, built sanitation facilities in their households.
 - 98% of built latrines were well used and maintained.
 - 63,440 people had access to community latrines thanks to the construction of 35 blocks of multi-pit VIP latrines, including 10 primary schools, each with a school health club working to ensure targeted WASH behaviours were observed, reaching 3,600 students.
 - At least 16,000 people have adopted the practice of handwashing with soap and water at critical times.

For the moment, our findings show that the benefit of the complementarity between the CLTS and SABC approaches lies in the following:

- firstly, **in the continued sequence of support for behaviour change, through their specific and interrelated actions**: from impact-driven awareness-raising to choosing to stop open defecation to opting for and practising the desired behaviours such as proper use and regular care of latrines and handwashing with soap;
- secondly, **in the diversity of interventions used to better reach - through emotions, culture and experience** - a large number of people, despite the issues of insecurity;
- and finally, **in the consistent repetition of key messages from the beginning to the end of WASH interventions**.

The factors that made it possible to successfully reach the project's targets, despite the prevailing climate of insecurity, were the involvement of the priority groups from the outset of the intervention design, emotional grounding as a trigger for commitment, and collective intelligence as a catalyst for sustainable action.

Thus, throughout the process of defining the steps for supporting behaviour change, several teams, fields of expertise and approaches had to come together, interact and understand each other to adapt and respond together to the changing needs of the project's priority groups.

United by a common goal of improving the people of the Sahel's living conditions, the ECED-Sahel team, leaders of change and priority groups worked together and progressively, despite taboos, biases and pitfalls. As one African proverb says, *"If you want to go fast, walk alone. But if you want to go far, walk together"*.

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To all partners, collaborators and the population of the communes of Gorom-Gorom and Falagountou,

To the CowaterSogema head office team who provided the tools and logistics to implement these non-conventional activities as part of a development project in a context of declining security conditions,

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Thank you!

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