

Rural Sanitation at household level and Primary Schools in Western, Nyanza and North Eastern Provinces of Kenya
- Improving rural sanitation to reduce poverty -

The Western, Nyanza and North Eastern provinces of Kenya are characterised by sanitation hot spots. These are areas where annual cholera epidemics occur during the long rains (April-July). There are also cases of cholera being reported in some of these areas during the dry periods (December- March). The disease outbreaks can be linked directly to the inadequate sanitation, poor hygienic conditions and high poverty index. Most of the existing pit toilets have very poor structures which are easily flooded during the rains thus contaminating the water resources with human faecal waste. Water in wells is often polluted by seepage from the toilet pits if safe distances are not observed during the positioning and construction. In addition, flies, maggots, pathogens and cockroaches breed in these toilet pits. Spread of diseases is thus common from these types of pit toilets. The odours from the pits are often offensive due to the wet mixtures of urine and faeces in the pits. The pits are filled within a period of 3-5 years thus making the owners to reinvest in the construction of new toilets. The digging of pits is expensive in rocky areas and dangerous in loose sandy soil areas where lining of the pit cannot be avoided.

The EU-GTZ-SIDA EcoSan Promotion project is implementing pilot rural sanitation projects in the affected areas of Nyanza, Western and North Eastern provinces which aims at addressing the above named challenges. The measures being undertaken in the project includes a combination of:

- Use of the existing community based groups as the entry points into the rural areas
- Conducting hygiene education
- Promotion of hand washing(after use of toilet)
- Piloting of Urine Diverting Dry Toilets (UDDT) with rain water harvesting for hand washing which serves 5 households (averagely 40 people) in order to produce adequate organic manure for the household farms. These toilets are odourless since they operate totally under dry condition (no mixing of urine and faeces). No water is required for flushing. This condition (pH, temperature and level of moisture) do not allow flies, cockroaches, pathogens and maggots to survive thus making the toilet clean, hygienic and comfortable to use. The per capita cost of KSh 1,000 is within the acceptable range. The cost of digging and lining a pit are not incurred as the case with pit toilets.
- Economic use of organic manure from the UDDT for agricultural and agro-forestry production as an income generating activity.
- Saving land for other beneficial activities instead of digging pits for latrines

The UDDT have a high acceptability already in rural households and at primary schools. This can be attributed not only to its sanitation benefits but majorly to its economic benefits. 250 UDDT are already in use in these areas of Kenya.



Household Urine Diverting Dry Toilet in Mumias area of Kenya



A typical pit latrine in rural households in Kenya