Report Information

Title of the report	Oxfam Final report

Task Group number	Predominantly Task group 2

Report date:	20th November 2018	Report prepared by:	Esther Shaylor & Tanya Glanville-Wallis

Project progress and results

1. Background

1.1. In-country initiatives to benefit practitioners in the global South by demonstrating the value of the SuSanA platform and increase the membership. Use of strategic partnerships; produce curated products and learning alliances.

In relation to outcome 2.3 "Improved outreach to identified target stakeholder groups" Oxfam and WaterAid planned country-focused activities, as described in the phase III proposal (page 16) and provided for in the budget.

The goal of these activities was to widen engagement with SuSanA in the global South. The initiative aimed to link global resources and expertise to ongoing programmes at country levels, thus enabling the programmes to benefit from technical input and expertise available within SuSanA. This involved convening knowledge management sessions towards greater member usage of the resources available from SuSanA to benefit in-country initiatives in the Global South.

The in-country activities were framed around supporting governments to achieve their commitments in relation to the sanitation-related SDG6 targets (see Figure 1). WaterAid and Oxfam aimed to coordinate the provision of technical support by SuSanA partners to the governmental agencies via these activities.
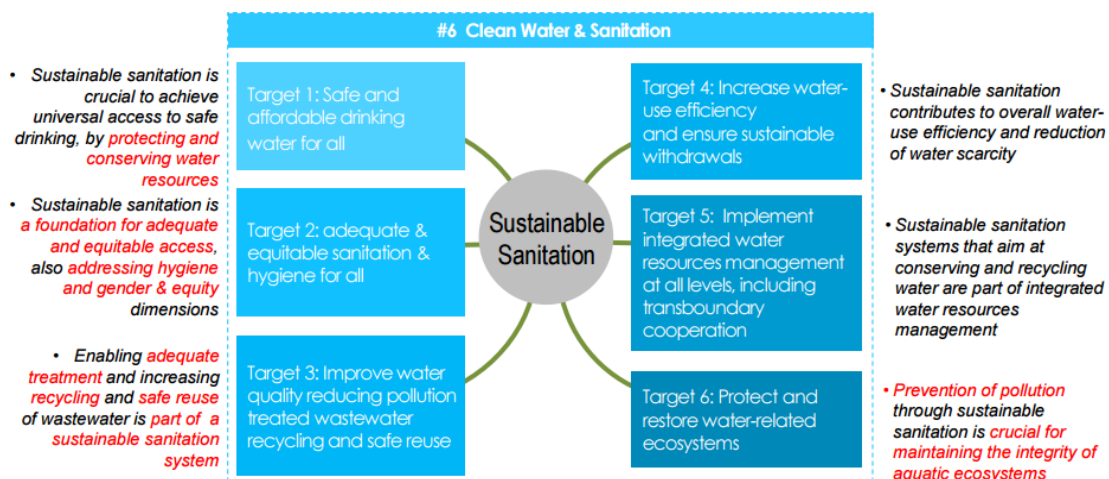

Figure 1 *Sustainable sanitation interlinkages with the targets of SDG 6*

Oxfam and WaterAid took different approaches to the task with a view to how the organisations operate, the countries they are operating in and the way SuSanA can support existing activities. Oxfam initially supported a workshop in Zambia with key government actors and later Emergency FSM activities in Cox Bazar, Bangladesh. WaterAid built the use of SuSanA into existing programmes in Ghana with the local ministry of Sanitation.

It is not possible to see direct outputs from these events so several initiatives were used to encourage engagement within the SuSanA platform. These are described in the outputs and milestones below.

2. Progress to date:

#	What the activity aimed to achieve	Output/milestone achieved	Indicator(s) if any	Remarks
1	In-country initiatives to benefit practitioners in the global South by demonstrating the value of the SuSanA platform and increase the membership. Use of strategic partnerships; produce curated products and learning alliances			
	General representation of SuSanA and promotion of the platform at relevant events	• Promoting SuSanA to the UK SanCoP at a number of events and ensuring the pages hosted on SuSanA are updated and curated • Attended FSM4 • Attended WEDC 2017 • Attended the SSP workshop in London • Attended the WASH cluster TWG • Attended the EEHF • Prepared a paper for WEDC 2018 to be presented by SuSanA representative	Networking record through the duration of the project.	
	In country activity supporting the Zambian ministry of water to utilise SuSanA as a resource	• One day workshop in Zambia following on from the government water conference • Community engagement webinar, November 2017	• 82 attendees in Zambia • 59 registered for the webinar, 110 views of the youtube recording	
	Internal promotion of SuSanA as a resource for sanitation within Oxfam	Regular sharing of the Oxfam newsletter that promotes SuSanA activities: • June 2017 • August 2017 • October 2017 • December 2017 • May 2018 • August 2018 • October 2018	As of November 2018, there are 241 people registered for the Oxfam WASH newsletter.	
	Engagement and representation of SuSanA with emergency WASH organisations	• Attended the WASH cluster TWG on Cash and Markets • Attended the EEHF and presented a poster about		

		SuSanA and how it supports the emergency sector • One on one discussions as opportunities have arisen all documented in the networking record		
1.1	Develop approach to promote and engage SuSanA around FSM activities and using case studies from Cox Bazaar	• A ToR for Esther to visit Bangladesh • Attend the workshop in Bangladesh		
1.2	Conduct meetings with relevant people about sharing information on SuSanA around emergency FSM	• Meet with at least 3 organisations delivering sanitation programmes in Cox Bazar to understand their perception of SuSanA, their KM needs and how SuSanA can support them. Details in the trip report here.		
1.3	Develop follow up activities for WG 8 related to the Bangladesh workshop, on SuSanA	• Make posts within WG8/forum about the sanitation situation in Cox Bazar • Update on activities at the 26th SuSanA meeting at WWW 2018		
1.4	Support ongoing activities on SuSanA around FSM in emergencies	• Posts in the relevant space on the forum to discuss key FSM discussion points • A workshop at FSM5 on emergency FSM using Cox Bazar as a case study		
2	Strengthen curation of SuSanA products and services and further web platform improvements			
2.1	Compile and share the Oxfam sanitation newsletter, promoting SuSanA and Oxfam's work in sanitation	Used the newsletter to highlight SuSanA posts of interest to emergency WASH actors. It was also used as a means of sharing the work of Oxfam with the wider SuSanA community		
2.2	Recording and production of simple how-to videos encouraging sanitation best practice in humanitarian situations to be shared through SuSanA's platform and encourage discussions around best practice	Sanitation Green Card produced in multi-media formats and shared on the SuSanA platform: • Illustrated PDF. • Animation. A mini-series of technical videos is also in post-production (as at November 2018) and will be		

		shared in due course.		
2.3	Develop emergency sanitation focused podcasts, as a way to reach SuSanAs audience using different media approaches	• Podcast 1 • Podcast 2 • Podcast 3	As of November 2018, the podcast series had been listened to as follows: - podcast 1: 251 listeners; - podcast 2: 221 listeners.; - podcast 3: 199 listeners.	
	Support to the Wikipedia activities by SuSanA to further improve the sanitation pages	• Active support and engagement for the initial Wikipedia event in March 2017 • Support for recruitment of actors in further Wikipedia events		
3	Restructuring and strengthening of the Working Groups to revitalise members contribution to contents as well as cross-learning following the new resolved concept note.			
3.1	Restructure WG webpages to include more information on engagement opportunities (e.g. systematic documentation of WG meetings and activities)	• WG4 meeting February 2017 • WG1 meeting February 2017 • WG8 meeting August 2017 • WG8 meeting April 2018 • WG1 meeting August 2018		**This task is completely dependent on how the leads want to engage and so beyond Oxfam's control**
3.2	Assist WG leads and members to organise webinars, meetings and TDS	• Influencing and Engaging government in sanitation, May 2017 • JMP webinar, November 2017 • Community engagement webinar, November 2017 • Black Solider Fly Larve, February 2018 • KM webinar, July 2018	• 142 registered for the webinar, the youtube video has been viewed 86 times • 176 people registered for the webinar, the youtube video has been viewed 166 times • 59 registered for the webinar, 110 views of the youtube video • 165 registered for the webinar, 308 views of the youetube recoding • 88 registered for the webinar	

3. Lessons Learned

3.1. In country activities

SuSanA activities in-country are well received but hard to maintain in the digital sphere. The events in Zambia and Ghana with a specific SuSanA focus were well received and there was a lot of interest from national staff that the events targeted (for example in May 2017 there were 73 SuSanA members registered in Zambia, in August 2018 there were 143). However, translating this interest into demonstrable actions on the platform has been harder.

There is an appetite for coordination and communication of updates and useful resources but it is generally one way. When talking with emergency practitioners the majority are aware of SuSanA and have referred to the platform for resources or in the earlier phases of their careers. The feeling is that as they progress the site is not specialist enough to their needs for the emergency element of their work. In emergencies, the WASH cluster will take a role in coordinating the resources of the local emergency (for example they can be found here for Cox Bazar), and so the generalist nature of SuSanA does not allow it to add any value. Solidarities International is currently working on a web platform that allows actors to share FSM case studies that are from emergency situations – whether or not this better serves the humanitarian sector will need to be monitored. SuSanA does well at providing technical information within the library, on systems and technologies, that can be used by emergency specialists.

SuSanA needs to ensure it engages with in-country activities in a transparent and practical way. SuSanA cannot brand itself as a think tank if there are 9,000 members but only a few active voices. It was challenging to know what SuSanA could offer to in country programmes when the reality is that it is dependent on which members will respond to queries or who has shared publications. When representing SuSanA, the best concrete offer was access to the library and use of the discussion forum; it was hard to know for example, how SuSanA could enhance activities in Cox's Bazar.

3.2. **Strengthen curation of SuSanA products and services and further web platform improvements**

Currently Oxfam does not have the capacity to contribute to platforms such as SuSanA. Within Oxfam there is not a culture of regularly contributing to Knowledge Management (KM) activities outside the organisation. There are some activities within the organisation that focus on sharing knowledge with other affiliates, partners and donors but less so within the sanitation sector. There is a need for Oxfam to better understand the time needed for KM activities to be able to contribute more, as an organisation, to SuSanA. On an individual level, there are some individuals that do utilise SuSanA fully but this is dependent on personality.

The Oxfam newsletter has been well received as an outreach tool in the sector. The success of the newsletter has been such that it will continue beyond the project's completion and has also prompted better internal communication of projects and activities. The Oxfam newsletter was initially started as part of this project and has been a useful tool to share Oxfam's activities but also key initiatives within the sector and from SuSanA. This may be an indicator that Oxfam's culture of KM is beginning to change and in time may be better suited to supporting SuSanA, however this is something that is organic and cannot be forced as it can be quite personnel dependent.

It is valuable to explore multimedia approaches to reach SuSanA members with interesting content. Under this project, Oxfam has done some experimentation with other multimedia approaches to sharing knowledge. It was highlighted in the user survey and a similar survey carried out by BORDA under a HIF grant, that there is a demand for more videos and other media to summarise (curate) knowledge.

3.3. **Restructuring and strengthening of the Working Groups to revitalise members' contributions to content as well as cross-learning following the new resolved concept note**

How a Working Group is used is dependent on concrete actions that members can contribute towards. The support to WGs has had limited impact due to the need to work with

the leads. Over the lifespan of the project there have been 3 people supporting 13 WGs however with the end of the project there will be less resources from the secretariat for this. The main need is for someone to be contacting the leads and nudging them to follow through on actions. Despite best efforts to support WGs to develop work plans there has been limited success. The most productive WG in terms of outputs has been WG8 who have supported the [emergency compendium of sanitation](#). But WG1 has been one of the more proactive with the leads working with the secretariat to develop capacity building approaches that will benefit SuSanA members. Some working groups have remained dormant as there is little concrete activity to motivate users to unite.

4. Challenges

4.1. In country activities

Representation of SuSanA at key events is still valued but it is costly. As stated, the activities in countries and representation of SuSanA at relevant meetings is always well received and enables members and prospective members to interact with a 'person' that can help guide them to get the best out of SuSanA. However, this is costly and the impact over the member base is limited. It also does not reach the key demographic of national staff. The workshops that have been carried out have been both time-consuming and costly to organise. While digital activities are well attended (webinars average about 60 people, not including those that watch later), they do not work for everyone. There is a need to better identify how SuSanA can be more efficient in allowing members to interact actively with SuSanA in a way they are comfortable with.

Activities need a local champion to drive them. The workshops and events carried out under this project have been expensive and time-intensive. With most of the team based in Europe and supporting activities in other continents there has been a need to have support from locally based people. None of the events would have been possible without local support, which highlights the need for local champions for SuSanA. Regional chapters are doing this to a certain extent, but as WaterAid are doing in Ghana, there needs to be a local champion who SuSanA can work through to better serve the sanitation actors' needs.

4.2. Strengthen curation of SuSanA products and services and further web platform improvements

WG activity is limited by the leads' actions and drive by members of the WG to use SuSanA. This has been discussed at length within the consortium and there is no clear way to address this. In the past WGs have contributed to publications, conferences or other activities within the sector but they need a concrete focus. There is some discussion about the value of the WGs as 'think tanks' or communities to support/address key issues however getting this translated into outputs is the challenge.

Clarity in the role of WGs especially in relation to the rest of the discussion forum. There is no real clarity in terms of the daily benefit of the WGs over the discussion forum. There have been posts made into the WGs that have been moved into the forum as they have wider interest to the SuSanA community. The WG email lists are carefully used to prevent overloading inboxes. While there is written guidance, many of the SuSanA members do not read this and therefore lack a clear idea of the purpose of each forum.

Using multimedia approaches requires dedicated budget and experienced communications personnel at the helm. The success of the podcasts and videos has been limited as such initiatives need to be produced regularly, with a clear communications strategy. To do this there needs to be a set budget and person for managing the approach, who may not be a WASH specialist. The Oxfam productions have been supported by the in-house communications team and would not have been possible without them.

5. Recommendations.

5.1. In country activities

Develop an engagement strategy for targeted countries. Countries cannot actively reach out to SuSanA as a key partner – if SuSanA aims to be the go to resource for sanitation actors it needs to demonstrate how it can support actions on the ground. The regional chapters do this to a point but are led by key organisations and may not reach all countries. Through this current grant, Oxfam and WaterAid have been able to trial some approaches that could work but are not sustainable at this time. SuSanA does not have a clear strategy to identify countries that would share the resource demands. However, if they did this, it may encourage others to understand what they need to do to get the best from SuSanA.

It is recommended that a clear engagement strategy be developed which could be shared with SuSanA members to pilot how they could engage though existing actors better with in country activities. Based on Oxfam and WaterAid's experience this should be put out for countries to respond to as working with large actors has not proved as profitable as it was hoped.

5.2. Strengthen curation of SuSanA products and services and further web platform improvements

A long-term communications and outreach strategy for WGs would ensure they better serve members. The current WG structure is deliberately open to be led by SuSanA's members on an ad hoc basis. This has worked in the past but seems to be less active in recent years. Therefore, it is suggested that a communications and outreach strategy be developed for the WGs that would give a better framework as to what is expected from leads. There is guidance for WG leads and while this may be consulted initially, it remains merely guidance. However, if there is key documentation to be worked through (a simple work plan, annual targets like updating the read list) this would support the secretariat to ensure the WGs are seen to be active in some way and further equip the leads with clarity around their contributions to SuSanA.

Selection of WG leads should be based on availability and drive to support SuSanA. The current activity of WGs varies depending primarily on the leads themselves. Some are active on SuSanA and have become deft at using the platform structure to work alongside their other projects and limit the need for additional systems to be used to honour their commitment as a lead. Other WGs have been dormant as neither the leads nor the members are utilising the recourse. The majority of current leads are professionals in their field and so are in high demand professionally with a range of commitments that often restrict them from supporting SuSanA in the way they imagined when they took on the role.

In recruiting WG leads it is recommended to embrace the time demands and the way that the WGs work to seek out early careers persons for the roles who have a need to build their networks and more time (in theory) to spend communicating and supporting SuSanA. Those earlier in their career will have a better incentive to mobilise the WGs and to ensure they are kept active.

Specify a budget to develop and support a communications approach for key curation activities. Increasingly there is a demand for curated media in alternative formats; the interest in podcasts, short videos and other multi-media is evident across recent user studies. Currently the communications approach is ad hoc and driven by the secretariat persons appointed to the SuSanA project. However, a more effective strategy could be planned in accordance with key WG activities/initiatives and events in the sectors calendar.

Make the IT platform better serve the WG format. To continue the use of WGs and to adjust to an ever-digital world it may be that there is technology that can better serve the needs of the SuSanA community to deliver a functional space for webinars, WG activities, notice boards, sub working groups and so forth. While such adjustments can be costly they can often also be phased and therefore planned for. SuSanA has not carried out a technical assessment of

software, the key functionalities of the platform, and what systems are available that could better serve this.

To do this and better support the digital operations of SuSanA there should be someone in the secretariat that has a knowledge management background as well as an understanding of the digital needs of an online platform, not just WASH expertise.

6.   Other Feedback

The structure of the consortium for the project duration. The design of the consortium approach for the project duration has presented challenges for achieving the planned outcomes, as evidenced by the project being terminated early by the donor. From Oxfam's perspective, the role of the organisation in the wider SuSanA structure was not clear – Oxfam never felt included within the secretariat's structure, so much so that it was felt they could only offer suggestions for the secretariat to consider and that other work, while officially conducted on behalf on SuSanA, was never fully endorsed by the secretariat.

Communication during the project was a challenge. The communications approaches used during the project were challenging. Various tools were employed in the beginning but when they didn't work they were not reviewed or adapted, but simply written off. This led to a high volume of emails and documents over the project's 2 years. The challenges in communication led to instances of misunderstanding and incidents that caused offence. Had these issues been addressed as they arose it could have improved the communication between the consortium, its ability to adapt to the change in donor expectations and the outcomes of the project.

Expectation management and target setting was not emphasised enough. At the beginning of the project, targets for deliverables were addressed and discussed at length in a meeting in Eschborn in January 2017. The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) process discussed was not developed any further and as such there was no real measurement for the project to ensure deliverables remained prominent and on track. This was a key factor in the change in donor funding. In future projects, the Terms of Reference need to better reflect the expectations of individual organisations and the focus for deliverables, reporting and monitoring progress.