

Sustainable Sanitation and Hygiene for All Programme (SSH4A)

Vietnam

Sanitation situation in Vietnam

In Vietnam 52% of the households in the rural areas have access to hygienic toilets, but there are considerable variations between the provinces. The remote mountainous villages in the north-western provinces have a high number of ethnic minority groups and households living in poverty. Open defecation is commonly practised and access to improved sanitation is as low as 21%.

SSH4A programme in Vietnam

The SSH4A programme aims at district-wide sanitation coverage and access to hygiene promotion. The programme reaches 11,000 households in 149 villages in three north-western provinces of Dien Bien, Lao Cai and Lai Chau. The programme is conducted within the framework of the government's National Target Programme for Rural Water Supply and Sanitation. SNV introduced community-led total sanitation (CLTS) in Vietnam in 2008 to demonstrate an innovative approach to increased sanitation access and demand creation, as well as an alternative to the current subsidy approach. Sustainability has been built in the programme by strengthening the capacity of households and communities to improve sanitation-related behaviour, whilst also building the capacity of the local service providers. Up to now, the programme has already made a significant impact, both in reducing open defecation and in changing the way the health departments approach behaviour change communication.

Partners

- Provincial Department of Health in Dien Bien, Lao Cai and Lai Chau.
- Centre for Preventive Medicine (CPM) in Dien Bien, Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Unit in Lao Cai.
- Women's Union and partners in the private sector.

Programme goal

Improved health and quality of life of 11,000 households in 3 districts in North-Western Vietnam through access to sustainable sanitation and hygiene.

Emerging results

- More than 35,000 people have actively participated in the community activities to end open defecation in their villages.
- The number of households with access to improved sanitation has doubled and open defecation has reduced remarkably.
- More than 350 motivators have been trained at the village level to ensure continuous support and sanitation promotion.

Key lessons

- Committed leaders at each level play instrumental roles in reaching consensus among stakeholders to achieve good results.
- Adapted version of CLTS has produced rapid results in triggering sanitation demand. But to be sustainable, it needs to be integrated as a part of a broader programme that includes supply chain development, localised behaviour change communication and consideration for gender and inclusion.
- Think in scale, but work in stages to develop the capacity of stakeholders and try to learn and adapt the present approach to ensure sanitation services and support are sustainable.



"We didn't know a toilet could be this simple. If we did, we would have made one sooner."

Village Health Worker, Ly Chui Phin village, Lai Cao

"Before there could be any attempt to change behaviours in the village, the attitude of village leaders need to change, and the CLTS process has been very successful in doing that."

Commune Chairman, Quai Cang, Dien Bien

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