Promotion of Nutrition Sensitive WaSH Self-Supply in the Sherbro Island in Bonthe District

Project Factsheet



Sea-face wall, Bonthe District

UNITY FREEDOM JUSTICE

Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

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SEND
SIERRA LEONE

Project Title:
Promotion of Nutrition Sensitive WaSH Self-Supply in the Sherbro Island in Bonthe District

Donor:
German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and Deutsche Welthungerhilfe (WHH)

Project Implementing Partner:
SEND Sierra Leone

Project Location:
Bonthe District, Southern Sierra Leone.

Duration:
December 2018 - August 2021

Project Budget:
€ 666,198

Project Thematic Areas:
WaSH, Health and Nutrition

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Bonthe Clock Tower

The PROBLEM:



Communities in Bonthe largely get their drinking water from rivers or brooks, which is a serious health risk

Sherbro Island in Bonthe District in Sierra Leone is one of the areas with the greatest food and nutrition insecurity, and poorest access to WaSH facilities. About 22.7% of the population in Bonthe District is considered food insecure. Less households consume a sufficiently diverse diet for their health and wellbeing. 60.7% of the people in the Sherbro Island draw their water from a river and only a few have access to adequate sanitation facilities. This causes a high prevalence of diarrhea diseases and poses a great health risk to the Island, and the District. The Sherbro Island has less credit institutions providing credit services to men and women. The only access to credit facility is through 'osusu', and thrift and credit for some communities, locally organized among people with a maximum loan of five hundred thousand Leones (Le 500,000) and minimum of one hundred thousand Leones (Le 100,000).

During preliminary assessment for the development of this project, 48.6% of respondents in the Sherbro Island consider access to clean drinking water to be a major priority and 79% consider access to VSLA/loans as necessary to improve their livelihoods and reduce vulnerability.

Due to the sandy soil, large number of the communities can only be accessed by boat, which is very expensive and in most communities, income is generated through the sale of fish. Agricultural activities also remain poor and at an insignificant scale to be able to provide sufficient food and income for the people. Development activities hardly reach the people in the Island due to its riverine ecology, sandy soil, and lack of inadequate river transport facilities that limit business activities.

The SOLUTION:

The project will facilitate the mobilization of communities to participate in the development of WaSH facilities through the community WaSH self-supply approach. This is a participatory sensitization process, in which the communities become aware of their hygiene and sanitation challenges and jointly develop solutions using the Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) or the Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation" (PHAST) approaches.

‘The project’s overall objective is to contribute in improving the nutritional and health status of 1,000 households in the Sherbro Island, Bonthe District’

By the WaSH self-supply approach, communities will be sensitized on gender, WaSH, nutrition, VSLA, microfinance, business development and how communities can promote self-initiatives to mobilize resources on their own to develop low cost WaSH project proposals to a Proposal Evaluation Committee set up by the project. When a community proposal is selected, the Water and Sanitation Promotion (WASAP) Company will be responsible for installations as experts on the self-supply approach to make sure communities develop water, toilets and other sanitary facilities to improve on their WaSH status.

The project’s overall objective is to contribute in improving the nutritional and health status of 1,000 households in the Sherbro Island in Bonthe District.

This will be achieved through the following results:

- ❑ Construction of water supply and sanitation infrastructure in targeted communities through sanitation marketing approaches using community based multipliers, health care givers, and traditional authorities. An Evaluation committee comprising of local stakeholders and project partners will be formed and trained to evaluate the communities' WaSH sub-project proposals and monitor the installation processes. Each community will develop WaSH proposals that includes both basic water and sanitation and submit to the evaluation committee set up by the project. SEND will commission WASAP for the technical installation of WaSH systems based on the proposals of the communities that include the construction of hand-drilled wells and EMAS



Because it’s a riverine region, the terrain is clay and sandy

The SOLUTION:

high toilets for 1,000 households each, and the installation of hand-washing facilities for two to three households each. The installation of wells and the construction of latrines will be carried out step by step after the received community or households' proposals have been examined and approved. WASAP selects and trains local technicians to build WaSH facilities to promote and maintain the marketing and maintenance of EMAS products after project completion.

- ❑ Establishment of structures for sustainable community participation and (financial) contributions to the development and maintenance of the WASH sector/institutions. A committee of local stakeholders and project partners will be formed and trained to evaluate WaSH proposals developed by households or group of households and monitor installation processes and the commitment of the communities. The committee will develop the selection criteria and tender documents for the community projects. Each community develops a WaSH sub-project that includes both basic water and sanitation and formulates a proposal to be submitted to the evaluation committee.

The best ideas are then selected and implemented by the respective communities with the technical support of SEND, WASAP and Welthungerhilfe. A microfinance program for income-generating activities is proposed under this result to be managed by local community savings and loan associations (VSLAs). The additional income from the VSLA/microfinance activitex enables households to invest in WaSH facilities.

- ❑ Enabling households' and communities' access to improved WaSH facilities through a WaSH self-supply system. Through fund raising strategy, participatory awareness raising activities through the community based multipliers to make the communities understand their hygiene and sanitation situation and develop action plans to address WaSH problems in their communities. The project will support the communities to form 50 VSLA/Micro finance groups to mobilize funds, using their local resources to finance the construction of WaSH facilities at household level. Another structure will be created for community members to contribute to a maintenance fund that will finance the maintenance of the WaSH facilities developed.



Majority of the communities in Bonthe Sherbro Island can only be accessed by boat

The TARGET BENEFICIARIES:



Some of the target communities are so backward and remote it has been a long while they've never seen visitors. Our field staffs were like aliens when they arrived.

This project is designed for two chiefdoms, Sittia and Dema in the Sherbro Island in Bonthe District in Southern Sierra Leone. It targets 1,000 households in 50 community clusters with challenges in accessing safe drinking water. These are communities that did not only drink from unprotected hand dug wells, but that also lack latrines and rely more on open defecation along the beach areas. The communities also have low knowledge on hygiene, nutrition and best sanitation practices. The commercialization of surplus economic products also remains low due to poor road network and less access to credit facilities. Intensive agriculture is also not possible due to the sandy soil. As a result, economic activities are centered on seasonal fishing and the tapping of palm wine.

To implement the project to address the stated challenges, 100 community multipliers will be recruited to serve as intermediaries in carrying out community mobilization and awareness raising activities on the project content and approaches in addition to three trained local technicians in each community who will continue to provide WaSH services to communities after the project shall have ended.

In addition, about 50 representatives from the DHMT, DC, the media, Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR), the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security (MAFFS), and community chiefs will be directly involved in the project through evaluation, monitoring and steering activities.

An indirect target group of 3,000 households (18,000 persons) is to be reached through the rollout and replication of the project activities.

The MEASURES, METHODS AND INSTRUMENTS TO ACHIEVE OBJECTIVES:

Awareness creation on household hygiene/sanitation, nutrition and health for community-led WaSH implementation

SEND Sierra Leone will raise awareness on community-led WaSH approach focusing on comprehensive behavioral changes to improve on access to clean drinking water and adequate latrines, for improving the health and nutritional status of the inhabitants of the Sherbro Island in Bonthe District. This will be done by training 100 local multipliers who will in turn train 1,000 households in 50 clusters of Gender Model Families (GMF) households in the areas of health, hygiene and nutrition. The GMFs, accompanied by SEND Sierra Leone, will pass on key messages to a further 3,000 households in their communities.

Mobilization of household resources for investment in improved WASH facilities

The project will support the communities to form 50 VSLA/microfinance groups to mobilize resources on their own through business and agricultural activities to finance the construction of WaSH facilities at household level. It will promote communities' participation in the development of WaSH infrastructure through trainings and engagements that shape the understanding and adoption of the WaSH self-supply concept. To enhance this, it will promote the VSLA and microfinance approaches to enable communities mobilize the required resources to make investment in WaSH. To ensure sustainability of WaSH outcomes, this action will also organize sanitation marketing campaigns and work with communities to establish WaSH maintenance funds to help them maintain the infrastructure developed to serve them better.

Community proposal development for WaSH Self-Supply

After various sensitization activities on the Community-led WaSH approach, SEND and community multipliers will mobilize 1000 households from 50 communities who have benefited from the Gender Model Family, health And hygiene trainings, and from the VSLA and microfinance support to develop WaSH proposals to the WaSH Proposals Committee for consideration. Prior to the development of the proposals, SEND and the Committee will develop a template to enable communities put their proposals together for consideration.

Construction of wells and latrines based on the EMAS technology

EMAS ((Escuela Móvil Aguas y Saneamiento básico = mobile schools for water and sanitation) is an NGO based in Germany, that aims to provide Sierra Leone's population with cost-effective water and sanitation and hygiene facilities, as well as a sanitation marketing strategy developed by Welthungerhilfe. EMAS has developed a range of low-cost WASH technologies for household use such as hand drilled wells, rainwater harvesting systems, domestic water treatment, hand washing facilities and various latrine models. The EMAS catalogue includes options such as drilled wells and surface toilets which are particularly suitable for the sandy soils on Sherbro Island.

Improvement of district coordination and facilitation structures for community-led WaSH promotion and self-supply

The self-supply project will promote coordination and communication among the project management team and local stakeholders. This involves working with local authorities in the selection of project communities, continuous coordination of project planning and implementation to ensure compliance with local development plans and for effectiveness in the achievement of stated objectives.

About the PARTNERS:

SEND Sierra Leone is non-governmental organization registered with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development of the Republic of Sierra Leone with a vision to contribute to a Sierra Leone where people's rights and well-being are guaranteed. SEND Sierra Leone is part of a West African structure with a headquarters in Ghana and offices in Liberia and Sierra Leone where approaches and experiences are shared. SEND Sierra Leone is an independent structure, a local NGO registered in Sierra Leone, which has its own project portfolio and budget separate from Ghana.
SEND's portfolio includes community development, WaSH, health, nutrition/agriculture and women's empowerment. Intervention areas are in the districts of Kailahun, Kenema, Kono, Western Areas Urban, and Rural districts and more recently, the district of Bonthe.
SEND is the lead implementing organization of this project.

Welthungerhilfe (WHH) is a German non-governmental organization working in Sierra Leone since 2003. WHH's project portfolio covers food and nutrition security, agriculture and income generation, WASH, waste management, public health, renewable energy and skills development. Main intervention areas are in the Eastern and Southern provinces – including Bonthe District and recently interventions in the North started. Welthungerhilfe implements several projects through local partner organizations to strenghten civil society.