

PEOPLE-CENTRED APPROACHES TO WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION

Community Managed, Self Financed Rural Sanitation Program of Sri-Lanka

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World Bank assisted 02nd community water supply and sanitation project was commenced in June 2003 and provides water supply and sanitation facilities for the selected communities in 02 provinces of Sri-Lanka. Deviating from the conventional subsidy based sanitation grant program, project (CWSSP) has given the new direction to establish community managed, self-financed sustainable sanitation program on a pilot basis. This innovative approach is put into operation in 18 villages of Central province and 12 villages in North –Western province at present. Communities and Community Based Organisations (CBOs) are the nucleus of this implementation process and the application of the system was assured through the establishment of Sanitation Revolving Fund (SRF).

Introduction

Improved sanitation is an important aspect of social and health development in rural areas of Sri-Lanka. The government of Sri-Lanka (GOSL) has set a target for improving the standard of living of the population by providing access to adequate sanitation for 70% of the population by 2010 and 100% by 2025. To achieve this goal in a sustainable manner, various governmental and non-governmental institutes have introduced and implemented a number of sanitation projects, which have tried out different strategies. Subsidies based sanitation program are the most attractive and popular among the rural masses and which are presently used very widely at village level. Meanwhile, the government financial assistance for improvement of sanitation facilities has been drastically curtailed and the most of project funded sanitation programs also have been shortened to specific period. It is evident that government assistance for the sanitation program has curtailed and budget allocation of health department in sanitary latrine construction has been reduced by 80% in recent past. This resulted, to persuade planners to formulate some sort of sustainable community managed sanitation program.

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- Demand driven and self finance approach;
- Community Based Organizations (CBOs) are managing the program
- Application of Sanitation Revolving Fund (SRF)
- Project involves as a facilitator rather than the implementer
- Program integrated with Local Government and Health Department.

The initiatives for the establishment of SRF

World Bank assisted 02nd Community Water Supply and Sanitation Project has promoted a SRF mechanism in lieu of the latrine subsidy program presently adopted in most sanitation improvement programs in Sri-Lanka. The SRF approach has been adopted to ensure the long-term sustainability of the latrine program, which often lags in the subsidy approach. The major initiatives were taken up at the SRF program implementation are:

- The SRF has been set up at sub-project level with involvement of CBOs and it's a prerequisite to establishment of the fund through pre-qualifying fees of beneficiary community.
- Project makes a grant of 50% value from the total requirement of latrines requested by each CBOs.
- The CBOs makes a loan of Rs. 3,000.00 for each beneficiary household towards meeting part of the cost of the latrine. Latrine costs in excess of Rs.3, 000.00 are borne by the respective HHs. (US \$ 01=Rs.97.00)
- CBOs are entrusted with management of the SRF and the terms of loan, repayment intervals, length of loan are determined by the CBO.

Table 1. Establishment plan for pilot based SRF				
District	No of villages	Total requirement (S. latrine)	50% of project assistance	Anticipated SRF assistance
Cental Province				
Matale District	12	1515	758	758 + future growth
Nuwaraeliya District	06	492	246	246 + future growth
North-Western Province				
Kurunegala District	12	1260	630	603 + future growth
Total	30	3267	1634	1634 + future growth

Table 2. Present progress on implementation of SRLF						
District	Estimated project contribution		Financial progress of project contribution (US\$ 01=Rs. 97.00)		Progress of SRLF	
	No of Latrines	Budgeted grant	Amount granted to CBOs	No of beneficiaries recieved loans	Latrine constructed	Progress of loan repayment
Cental Province						
Matale	758	2,274,000.00	1,260,000.00	484	429	95%
Nuwaraeliya	246	738,000.00	582,000.00	220	198	86%
North-Western Province						
Kurunegala	630	1,890,000.00	1,260,000.00	460	387	89%
Total	1628	4,902,000.00	3,102,000.00	1164	1014	90%

- The SRF will used to provide new loans to the beneficiary families who are waiting in the beneficiaries list and this process is expected to cover the total sanitation requirement of the community in the long run. With the current progress, it has been estimated that full latrine coverage in target beneficiaries will be completed by 03 years.
- The funds to commence the sanitation revolving loan fund usually come in tranches of Rs.30000.00 to Rs.45000.00 and this enables 10 to 15 households to borrow from the fund at a time. (US \$ 01=Rs.97.00)

SRF program has been started in 40 Villages (GNDs) at the initial stage of the project in June 2003. Out of a total latrine requirement of 3267 in 02 provinces, project has initiated loan facilities through granting of financial assistance to 1164 beneficiaries in 30 CBOs .1664 families are being supported by the project through SRF at initial stage and balance of 50% and the future growth of sanitation requirement will cover by the CBOs itself through SRF. The success of this new approach will largely depend on the effectiveness and efficiency of the repayment program designed and implemented with the recipient families. Loan recoveries in the process are very progressive and management capacity of CBOs in SRF is also commendable. The details of establishment plan and present progress of pilot based SRF are shown in Table 01 and 02

Adopted strategies by the project

Past experience has shown that once people understand the importance of good sanitation and hygiene, the community itself will create a demand for facility and healthy environ-

ment in execution of sanitation program. Hence, project firmly believes that comprehensive hygiene education and community awareness program would direct the needy peoples to organize themselves for the fulfillment of their requirements. Eventually, organized community guides the beneficiaries for involvement in labour, material and fund for sanitation construction. Hence, project has assured this novel approach of community managing, self-financing and sustainability on sanitation will be popularized among the all stakeholders of the sector. The details of existing project implementation strategy are shown in Figure 01

Local government administration is facilitating the program with the involvement of Provincial Councils and Divisional Councils. Partner Organizations (POs) are responsible to support the communities in setting up appropriate institutional structure at community level (CBOs) and assisting in planning and management of SRF program. CBOs, are undertake the entire responsibility of project implementation and continuation of program to meet the future requirement of sanitation.

The project achievement

- Establishment SRF is a significant event in this approach as it offers wide array of changes among community and in their institutions. The SRF aims to address;
- Social obligation of beneficiaries
- Will solve total sanitation problem in the village
- Creation of new culture among the rural community
- 30 CBOs in 02 provinces were encouraged and tied with novel approach of community managed and self-financed sanitary latrine program

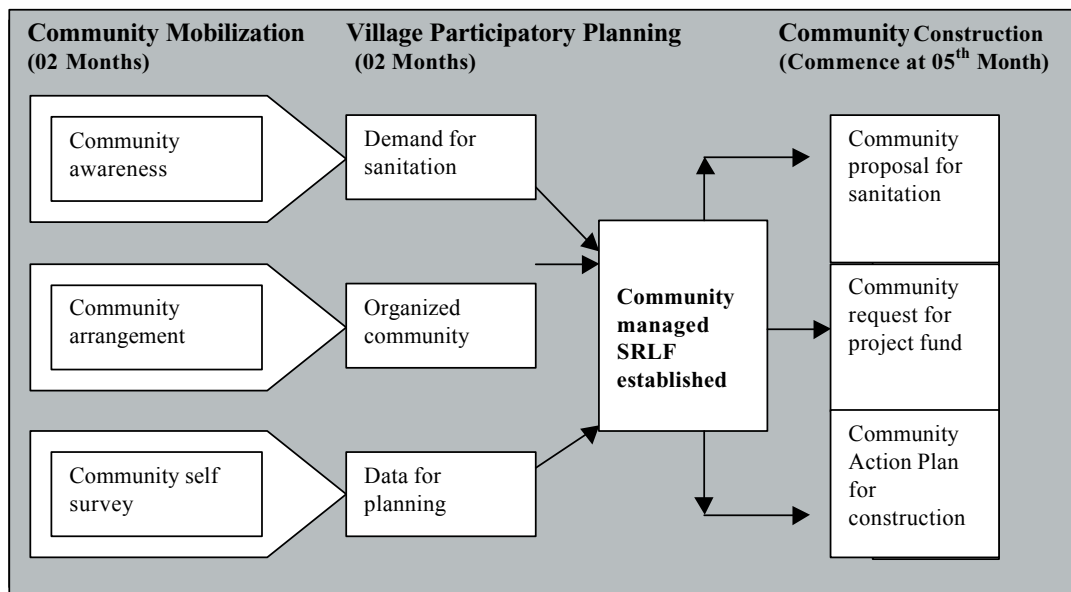


Figure 1. Existing project implementation strategy

- 1014 households are motivated and encouraged to construct their own sanitary latrine through the SRF process.
- The comprehensive loan system has been established through granting of Rs 3,102,000.00 to the CBOs for the implementation of community managed sustainable sanitation program.
- An average of 90% progress has been achieved by the CBOs in loan repayment of SRF.
- On the strength of the experience gained with the implementation of 1164 latrine constructed in 30 GNDs, project has built the confidence that the project could be now launched in a widest scale with assurance of success.
- The success of this new approach of SRF program will largely depend on the effectiveness and efficiency of the loan repayment program. Once the self-discipline is standstill among the beneficiaries would be resulted to collapse the whole process. Hence, CBOs are to be strengthened in comprehensive manner to continue the program in a sustainable way.
- It is evident that this new approach is mismatch with the prevailing policies in sanitation promotion and hence, change of attitude of planers are challenging.
- There is a possibility of some most needy low-income householders being dropped out from benefits due to the imbedded deficiency in the approach, which is inability of poor to pay loans. Intensive social mobilisation together with the formation of small credit groups would be appropriate even though it taken a long time.

Present challenges faced in the process.

- Efficiency of CBO to implement a sanitation program through SRF is yet to be assessed and to make any analysis would be a tough task due to short life period of the program.
- Success of this new approach is merely based on the progress of the loan discipline taken place among recipient of project benefits. Hence, CBOs involvement in selection of beneficiary families for the SRF program has confined to the affordability rather than the suitability.
- Subsidy based project implementation in sanitation is a well-known culture among the various Government and Non-government Organization in Sri-Lanka. Hence, This new approach is not much eye-catching program among the rural masses and it will leads to drop out some needy community from SRF.

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