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sustainable environment, education & development

Interim Report

Project Malio (Year 3): A community-led approach to eliminating open defecation and facilitating sustained behaviour change, Fort Dauphin, southeast Madagascar

Activities conducted from May – October 2016



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1. Introduction

In September 2015 the United Nations General Assembly accepted the Sustainable Development Goals. As part of these 17 inspirational and challenging objectives, Goal Six, relating to the state of global water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), aims to eradicate the practice of open defecation by 2030. Nonetheless, open defecation remains the only option for over 1 billion people worldwide (UNICEF, 2016). In Madagascar, this not only necessitates improvement of sanitation infrastructure and services, but also a programme of engagement in sustained behaviour change to improve sanitation and hygiene practices. Nationwide, only 14% of the population have access to improved sanitation, an alarming statistic reflecting the small proportion of people who have toilets which safely separate the user from faecal matter (WHO, 2015). In the peri-urban commune of Fort Dauphin, this results in the widespread practice of open defecation. As a result, diarrhoea, malnutrition and associated childhood stunting are common place, and the devastating health and economic implications cannot be overstated.

In response, SEED Madagascar, in partnership with local ONG Azafady, continue to strive to not only improve the town's sanitation infrastructure, but ignite sustained behavioural change which supports better hygiene practices and reduces open defecation. Project Malio aims to motivate and mobilise using innovative project activities to empower the community to take action to eradicate the practice of open defecation. In project year three (PY3), emphasis has been placed on the sustainability of behaviour change, alongside the continual push to reach as many people as possible. This report details the activities conducted during the first six months of the third and final year of Project Malio, from May to October 2016.

2. Activity Detail

2.1 Sanitation Action Planning and Household Sanitation Support

In-depth refresher training was conducted with all Malio staff before any triggering events began. Concerns raised through the evaluation of triggering activities in PY2 were addressed and improved methods of facilitation, for both institutional and household triggering, were developed. Following the training, institutional triggering activities took place in the three remaining *fokontanys* of Ampamakiambato, Tanambao and Bazar-be in June. These garnered the vital support of key stakeholders including opinions leaders and the chief of each *fokontany*. In addition, an extra workshop was completed with local stakeholders and partners, to explain why triggering is carried out and ensure stakeholders have a better understanding of the overall process. The aim of this was to build a stronger partnership with stakeholders and enable them to be further involved with activities. In addition, it is hoped that this capacity building will support more community meetings and planning within *fokontanys* in the future without the reliance on the project's assistance.



Community Sanitation Agents attend training and receive their monitoring uniforms

Once key stakeholders had been engaged, the process of household triggering began in July, in all three *fokotany*s. A total of 19 triggerings took place with 521 participants, bringing the number of triggering events at household level to a total of 69, with 2,305 households attending over the three year project at an average of 33 households per event. This count does not include children who attended with their parents. Following triggering events, the Community Liaison Officers (CLOs) conducted follow-ups with each household to check their progress against pre-existing individual and hamlet level action plans; thereby enabling ongoing evaluation of motivation levels amongst the latrine beneficiaries. After sanitation action plans had been evaluated, CLOs carried out site verifications for those beneficiaries who had signed up to a latrine to ensure each household met the criteria regarding land ownership, space and vulnerability criteria.

On completion of the site verifications, selected beneficiaries officially entered an agreement with SEED and ONG Azafady and paid their latrine contribution of 5,000AR. This contribution was a nominal fee to confirm the motivation of the beneficiaries and encourage a sense of ownership for the latrine structure and ongoing maintenance. A number of challenges arose during this process in the *fokotany* of Ampamakiambato. Some sectors in the Ampamakiambato are a significant distance from the centre of the town; as a result, some beneficiaries struggled to come to the office to pay their contribution as this would have required time out of their daily working schedule. It was therefore decided that for these areas, a mobile payment option would be arranged to ensure that people did not miss out on the opportunity to sign up for a latrine. Furthermore, in the very vulnerable sector of Esana-Sud in Ampamkiambato, where many residents rely on preparing gravel and

sand for their livelihood, beneficiaries have been able to contribute materials instead of the financial payment. This compromise was provided as the payment schedule fell within the time that parents needed to pay for their children's school fees for the beginning of the school year. As the reason behind the payment contribution is to prove commitment to and ownership of the latrine, the preparation and provision of latrine materials still illustrates a pledge, whilst ensuring that many more beneficiaries could be included in the process.

Although, all contribution payments were finalised in September, August saw an extensive shortage of cement within Fort Dauphin caused by a lack of shipments reaching the south of Madagascar. This has had a significant impact on project planning cycle as construction of household latrines fell behind schedule, having an associated impact on focus groups, household support visits and participatory monitoring. CLOs have been providing as much household support as possible throughout this time and beneficiaries are being kept updated with progress. Scheduling has been adapted to correspond with this modified timeframe and the Malio team have made every effort to mitigate any negative impact on the programme objective.

Non-beneficiary focus groups have been running with the support of Malio Community Sanitation Agents (COSANs) since September. Meetings have focused on hand hygiene, latrine use and maintenance, and stopping open defecation. As some non-beneficiaries currently do not have access to a latrine, the focus of these sessions are on small achievable actions, such as digging holes, covering food, and hand washing; which can have an immediate impact on both their environment and health. Similar to previous project years, it has been necessary to provide small material incentives, such as soap, to ensure that attendance remains high.



Left: Residents indicate they want to stop open defecation. Right: Institutional triggering in Bazar-be

2.2 Faecal Sludge Management Research

As PY1 and PY2 Malio latrines start to fill up, latrine emptying and the safe disposal of faecal matter has become an ever-increasing project priority. Currently there are a small number of latrine emptiers in Fort Dauphin who usually work under the cover of darkness and are not easily reachable due to the taboo surrounding this type of work. In August, our Faecal Sludge Management (FSM) Specialist joined the Malio team to begin an in-depth community research project into the *fady* (taboo) surrounding latrine emptying. The FSM specialist worked closely with Malagasy staff to develop a culturally sensitive household survey which will be conducted with 178 randomly selected latrine owners. Following this research, the evaluation of which will be completed in January, the team will develop latrine emptying workshops. Firstly, beneficiaries who want to empty their own latrines will be provided with advice and practical training on techniques for proper and safe disposal. Secondly, a series of workshops for existing emptiers in town will be developed to improve existing health and safety, as well as professional marketing of services, so that emptiers can be contacted easily. In addition, research will support further understanding of household willingness to pay for latrine emptying services and identify whether emptying has become a priority for households. These activities are designed to gain an understanding of local taboos to ensure that the project intervention supports greater acceptance of latrine emptying as a professional and alternative livelihood, as the anticipated demand for emptying increases. Overall this research will inform outreach strategies to overcome latrine emptying barriers for both individual households and professional emptiers, and help to ensure the sustainability of Project Malio Latrines.

2.3 Partner Association Professional Training and Evaluation

Project Malio is supporting four partner associations (PA) in its third year: continued support for Fikambanana Ampotatra Miray Inina (FIAMI), Fikambananiny Tanora Ambinanikely (FTA) and Fikambanana Ara Sosicely Tanambao (FISOTA) and new support for The Scouts Association. This continued support of FIAMI, FTA and FISOTA was based on an assessment of engagement in past training sessions and the final evaluation conducted at the end of PY2. The Scouts Association was chosen because of their potential to have a large impact within Fort Dauphin, due to their network presence in each fokontany as well as their previous experience of awareness raising on hand hygiene. Additionally their previous collaborations on mass with project Malio, made the Scouts Association a natural partnership.

The Malio project has provides each association with 11 professional capacity building sessions and weekly mentoring. Following each training session, the associations are given practical assignments to further their understanding of the theoretical learning. In addition,

an evaluation of their understanding and participation is conducted by the partner association mentor, and feedback on each training session is provided by the associations. Although each association has different knowledge gaps and levels of understanding, PA feedback indicates that generally the majority of trainings have been pitched at an appropriate level.

As well as empowering associations to advocate and raise awareness on reducing open defecation, partner capacity building has enabled associations to develop their own activity plans and support skill development in key areas. For example, PA FIAMI used their training on advocacy and letter writing to request support from a local business in town to empty the public latrine that they manage. As a result of this partnership, the association have not struggled to finance the latrine emptying; leaving a greater budget for continued maintenance. This public latrine provides around 70 people a day with access to improved sanitation.

2.4 Mass Advertising Campaign, Mobilisations and Radio Broadcasts

As the mass media campaign enters its third and final year, evidence of awareness raising can be seen throughout the town. From the number of people wearing Malio t-shirts, to the huge number of people listening to the Malio drama series, it is clear that sanitation and hygiene messages have been spread far and wide throughout Fort Dauphin. The radio continues to be a key source of communication; and, alongside short information slots, community interviews have played an important role in igniting discussion concerning the town's sanitation issues. The Malio drama series continues to be played each week across three radio stations. A new series based on latrine emptying and smell reduction will be developed in November and aired over the last six months of the project.

To assess the reach of radio activities, in October an assessment was undertaken by the Malio Media Manager Officer. Across Fort Dauphin 120 people were interviewed about their understanding of Malio radio messages and whether it had had an effect on their behaviour. 81% of people interviewed had heard of Malio and had listened to the project's radio broadcasts on one of the three stations within Fort Dauphin. 66% of respondents stated that information on the radio had influenced a shift in their behaviour, with many identifying improved hand hygiene and the use of a latrine as the main areas of change. In addition to radio activities, key activities have been filmed and aired on regional and national TV stations increasing our reach of project messages (see section 2.6).

Global Handwashing Day (GHD), which was celebrated on the 15th of October, saw a successful collaboration with the Scouts Association. In the busy market streets, the Malio team and the Scouts conducted mass awareness raising activities on the importance of good hand hygiene. This included a puppet show, an interactive quiz, songs and games, and many

hand washing demonstrations. The event drew in a large crowd of approximately 200 people and was particularly popular with children. Alongside performing, the Scout Association assisted the collection of data for the knowledge, attitudes and practices survey; 95 participants between nine and 80 years old were interviewed over the course of the event. Questions focused on handwashing and latrine use behaviour, as well as knowledge of disease transmission. 88% of participants said that they used a latrine rather than practicing open defecation. 92% of those interviewed correctly stated that flies are able to transmit faeces to food. However, only 44% of people correctly identified handwashing as the best method of preventing diarrhoea, when given the option of; visiting a doctor, taking antibiotics or sleeping. Furthermore, when asked which disease could be caused by the practice of open defecation, 12% chose Malaria, 81% chose diarrhoea, 3% chose pneumonia and 4% chose diabetes. This indicates that further progress needs to be made in terms of raising awareness across Fort Dauphin on disease transmission and hand hygiene.



Left: children watch the GHD puppet show. Right: members of the scouts assist with handwashing demonstrations

2.5 Dissemination

Dissemination of project learning continues to be successful as Malio increases its regional and international presence. In May, Malio's international project specialist and the Head of Community Health presented the project at a poster exhibition as part of the WASH Futures Conference in Brisbane, Australia. The conference brought together experts in WASH from around the world including practitioners, academics, government representatives and consultants. The theme of the conference was '*Pathways to Universal and Sustained Water, Sanitation and Hygiene*', which covered many areas relevant to the Fort Dauphin context, such as faecal sludge management, accessing the most vulnerable in society, and a range of evaluations on Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) methodology. The conference was split into three days of lecture style talks and discussions, followed by two days of practical workshops. In the evenings, poster events and networking sessions helped Malio staff to connect with practitioners working on innovative projects around the world and enabled in-depth discussions concerning on-the-ground experience.

Following this, in July the international project specialist accessed external funding to present a research paper at the 39th Water, Engineering and Development Centre conference in Ghana on the project's experience of piloting controversial Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials. Throughout the week, over 400 academics and practitioners from around the world came together to share knowledge of international best practice concerning WASH and learn about innovations within the field. Feedback on the presentation of the academic paper was extremely positive, and several connections with organisations doing similar activities were established. This international exposure has not only been progressive for the Malio project but for the knowledge of staff who received capacity building sessions based on conference sessions.

National project dissemination has also increased this year through airing short films on Malio activities on both regional and national television. Broadcasting of such events helps to further the exposure of the project and is a celebration of its successes. In September, the first broadcast was aired which showed the celebration of the 'National School Friends of WASH' certification (see section 2.7).



Dr. Mamy, Head of Community Health, presents a poster on the Malio project at the WASH Futures Conference

2.6 School Activities

Following the evaluation of our partner schools and their progress towards WASH improvements, the ceremony for the certification of the “National School Friends of WASH” took place in July. This saw the presentation of individual plaques for schools which had

reached either level I or level II. Two of our partnering primary schools gained the highest level II certification, and eight primary and one middle school received level I. The remaining six schools have no certification as yet; but it is hoped that with additional support this year in the shape of improved infrastructure, latrine maintenance guidance and educational sessions, and teacher trainings, that these schools will improve enough to gain certification at the end of PY3.

In August the annual National School Sports competition was held in Fort Dauphin. Over 2,000 students, accompanied by their teachers, travelled to the region to take part. Project Malio took this opportunity to extend the scope of its participatory WASH education sessions. Over three evenings, the Malio team delivered puppet shows, quizzes and interactive games focused on handwashing and latrine maintenance to over 500 previously un-contacted students.

Prior to the beginning of this school year, new educational packs were developed, including games, educational props and lesson plans for each topic. These education packs will be used in all of Malio's partnering primary schools throughout the year and will continue to be a valuable resource for other SEED education-based projects in the future. The School Liaison Officer (SLO) underwent further training on these new resources and accessed time management and scheduling assistance. Additionally the project trained new puppet players from a youth group in Fort Dauphin, increasing Malio's mass mobilisation capacity significantly to a troupe of 18 trained players. These represent successful capacity building efforts, with which we hope will ensure a reach of 10,000 students in our education sessions this academic year.

In May, the School Liaison Officer and Malio Project Coordinator facilitated a two day workshop to establish WASH committees in each partnering school. The aim of these committees is to ensure that the agreed maintenance plans are followed and management of school sanitation facilities remain sustainable once project Malio has finished. During the workshop, goals and responsibilities for each committee were established and a monitoring system was set up. To coincide with the new school year, additional training and monitoring of progress by the SLO has been undertaken with these WASH committees.

In September, the head teacher of Sainte Louise de Marillac School in Ampamakibato requested a triggering session for the school's 30 teachers. As the school has recently been provided with new latrines from an external funder, the team felt that this was a good opportunity to widen triggering activities outside of Malio's original partner schools. Progress will be followed up in the coming months and the teachers will also attend trainings on Malio's new education modules. This will form part of wider plans to disseminate Malio's educational resources throughout the region.

Mass mobilisations for older students have taken place at two high schools involving 1,202 students. These events lasted over two hours and included an interactive quiz, a puppet show, and a question and answer session.



Head teachers receive their National Friend of WASH certification

2.7 School Latrine Provision

The construction team has taken advantage of the school holidays throughout July and August to work on school latrine provision in five partnering schools. Befalafa primary school has received one new latrine build and one complete renovation of the existing latrine block, which was in a state of disrepair. Both latrine blocks now have separate boys' and girls' facilities, increasing the privacy for students. This infrastructure will provide improved sanitation for Befalafa's 2,059 students. Ambinanikely primary school has received a full refurbishment of the two badly damaged latrine blocks, providing safe and clean sanitation for its 457 students. Both the primary and secondary school within the *fokontany* of Tanambao have also been provided with construction support for their latrines. At the secondary school, a new latrine block was built, consisting of four cubicles and two urinals, to support 1,798 students. At Tanambao primary school, a complete refurbishment of both latrine blocks was undertaken to empty and significantly improve the old latrines, which had broken doors and roofs. The refurbishment will benefit the school's 1,458 students. Lastly, at Amboanato primary school, both latrine blocks have been completely renovated, providing eight new latrines with urinal areas and separate boys' and girls' facilities. This has provided Amboanato's 753 students with significantly improved facilities.

Further to the construction, hand washing murals have been painted on each new school latrine as a reminder for students to practice good hand hygiene. In total, the project's school latrine construction efforts have benefitted 6,525 students across five schools in the last six months. All schools have had an official handover, including the presentation of keys, from the Malio project. The maintenance and management of these new latrine blocks will be monitored through the monthly SLO monitoring visits, and quarterly visits from the regional WASH committee - comprising of the Ministry of Water, the Ministry of Education, senior Malio staff and Diarano WASH (national WASH network). Monitoring of the individual school WASH committees will continue to evaluate whether latrine maintenance is being managed effectively (see section 2.7).



Head teachers receive the new school latrine keys in an official handover ceremony

2.8 Public Latrine Support

The public latrine within the *fokontany* of Amparihy continues to be managed by Avotry association which provide monthly financial reporting and Malio's partner association mentor conducts weekly observations of cleanliness and general upkeep of the building. The overall cleanliness rating for the past six months was 2.5 out of 5, highlighting that overall the latrines have been kept to an acceptable standard. Although Avotry association and the day guardian are motivated towards the upkeep and sustainability of the public latrine, due to the unfortunate difficulties with the business unit, and a lack of rent over an extended period of time, the proposed funding mechanism for the public latrine is not functioning as per the project design. Furthermore, adverse weather and a lack of disposable funding has had a detrimental effect on the maintenance of the public latrine over the last six months. However, Project Malio is facilitating the discussions between the association and the municipality to ensure the public latrine continues to be sustainable despite these challenges. Furthermore, Avotry association have managed to secure external funding to fix the damage to the wind caused by the roof. In the coming months, Malio staff will work hard to secure an agreement between all parties which allows the continuation of a well maintained and clean public latrine.

3. Conclusions and Lessons Learned

Evaluation and lessons learned from both PY1 and PY2 of Malio have been fundamental in developing an effective final year of the project. Significant progress has been made, not only in the uptake of positive behaviour change within Fort Dauphin, but in how the team have handled challenges and responded to emerging project needs in specific contexts. For example, following refresher staff training in May, the triggering process was adapted to further meet the needs of project beneficiaries. Several improvements were made to the framing and facilitation of events, as well as the time taken for such events, and the number staff attending. This has ensured that events have become more participatory and can be run in conjunction with each other as fewer staff members are required. The result of this is that more people are triggered per event, improving the impact of activities; with the aim that neighbouring *fokontanys* will be willing to shift away from open defecation simultaneously.

The need to be flexible in our approach is a theme which has been highlighted throughout the project, as each *fokontany* presents a range of different challenges in terms of logistics and motivation. For example, the *fokontany* of Bazar-be has many houses with night guardians who do not own their own land. Although falling under the vulnerable criteria for the project, the lack of land presents a significant problem to latrine construction. To try to address this issue, the team conducted a triggering event with landowners showing how proximity to open defecation sites can still adversely affect their health even if they have their own latrine. The team reported that the landowners were motivated to take action on this; however, they were not prepared to give more land for latrines to be built on. It was therefore suggested that two public latrines in Bazar-be could be re-opened to meet this demand. The team will continue to collaborate with this community to facilitate the opening and the sustainable management of these latrines. In such circumstances, the team have learnt that although household latrines may not be a possible solution, engaging the local community can help to explore alternative solutions.

Management capacity within the team has improved since PY2, through an increased focus on weekly coordination meetings, monthly management meetings and quarterly evaluation of activities. Increased communication between staff members has had a positive effect on scheduling of activities and staff morale; whilst small incentives, such as the presentation of 'Malio staff member of the month', has also helped motivation levels. As project Malio begins its final six months, the team is ready to work hard to ensure that the significant amount of outstanding work is completed to a high standard, and activities can be sustained after Project Malio has come to an end.