40th WEDC International Conference, Loughborough, UK, 2017

LOCAL ACTION WITH INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION TO IMPROVE AND SUSTAIN WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE SERVICES

Pathways to improving sustainability of WASH services: influencing government planning and decisions, Indonesia

H. Ferdian (Indonesia), R.R. Putra & L. Leong

PAPER 2669

The Indonesian Government estimates that it will cost US$21.6 million to achieve the country's 2019 Universal Sanitation Access goal. However, an assessment, by Plan in ten districts found that district governments were allocating under 1% of their annual budget to WASH. A key pathway to achieving the Universal Sanitation goal and to improving WASH service sustainability is through enabling local governments to independently and sustainably resource and support WASH improvements. This is critical for improving services sustainably for the poor, who are most affected by government resource decisions. Within a project context, Plan and local government partners developed and applied a series of successful strategies to influence government decision making processes. The combination of these strategies had not been undertaken previously in Indonesia. In only three years, these strategies have resulted in the project's five district governments securing funding for sanitation and hygiene implementation for 363,000 people in 242 villages.

Introduction

Indonesia has the second highest number of citizens global defecating in the open, with 54 million lacking improved sanitation. This issue is particularly acute in rural areas where only 46% of the population have improved sanitation facilities (compared to 71% in urban areas) (Unicef and WHO 2015). Inequity in access to sanitation is also significant with Indonesia among 35 countries that have experienced decreased sanitation equality across wealth quintiles over two decades (Unicef and WHO 2014). The Government of Indonesia (GoI) has committed to Universal Sanitation Access by 2019 for the whole country and estimates that achieving this goal will cost US$21.6 million (National Water and Sanitation Group 2014). Despite this strong commitment at national level, the GoI has identified its central budget can only stretch to covering a maximum of 20% of this total. Further, progress at the local level has been variable, and whilst the Universal Sanitation Access commitment has been legalised as a regulation at national ministerial level, a large gap remains to convert this policy to implementation at the sub-national level. This paper provides a practical case study example of how Plan Indonesia (Plan) has been working with GoI to address this gap.

Background context

One critical pathway the GoI has been trying as a means to improve WASH (and sanitation and hygiene in particular), throughout the country is through its National Sanitation Policy –entitled Community Based Total Sanitation (*Sanitasi Total Berbasis Masyarakat*). This is known as the STBM policy (Minister of Health Decree No.3/ 2014). STBM has a five-pillar approach to mobilise communities for total sanitation and hygiene. A community is said to have achieved total sanitation when there is: open defecation free (ODF) status (pillar 1); hand washing with soap (pillar 2); household drinking water management (pillar 3); household solid waste management (pillar 4); and household liquid waste management (pillar 5).

Despite a strong enabling environment for WASH at the national level, progress has been particularly slow on the part of Indonesia's sub-national (mainly district) governments who hold the responsibility for front-line sanitation service delivery to communities. Greater progress is inhibited for a range of reasons

including: a) Decentralisation of the government system which has seen a disconnect between national and lower levels of government for STBM, making operationalisation of national policies ineffective; b) Geographical isolation of some provinces which has seen uneven access to sector resources, support and information; c) Limited sector knowledge and experience of local level governments; d) Limited coordination in regards to sanitation and hygiene issues across government agencies; e) Inactive government WASH working groups/STBM teams at district, sub-district and village levels; and f) Lack of investment in STBM at district level with resources being prioritised for other areas such as infrastructure. Plan's 2013 analysis found that hygiene practices reflected this lack of attention whereby in ten districts in Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT) province (one of the poorest provinces in Indonesia) only 57% of people wash their hands with soap, 50% have appropriate solid waste management, and 25% manage their liquid waste (Plan Indonesia 2013). This analysis also found that district governments were only allocating under 1% of their budgets for WASH. Further, this small investment predominately went to funding infrastructure construction rather than behaviour change programs. Further in 2013, the lack of local government resource prioritisation was also reflected in the inadequate resources and quality of WASH services in NTT, with only 37% of households in the same ten NTT districts having improved sanitation coverage (Plan Indonesia 2013).

Snapshot of project strategies

Plan Indonesia, with the support of Plan Australia and funding from the Australian Government's Civil Society (CS) WASH Fund, is currently implementing a four year project (2014-2017) in five districts (Ende, East Manggarai, Ngada, Kupang and Sabu) of NTT Province. The project has a budget of US$2.4 million and essentially aims to operationalise Indonesia's national STBM policy at scale with a focus on sustainability through a government-led approach. At the core the project's theory of change have been a number of strategies as pathways to address the key barriers for improving sanitation and hygiene coverage. These include:

- Securing upfront commitments from local governments and heads of districts. This includes financial, personnel and time commitments for STBM implementation. District Governments and the head of districts (*Bupati*) were asked to commit to the STBM processes and resources upfront through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) before the project agreed to work within their districts. This was done after socialisation and monitoring of STBM in the proposed districts by the NTT provincial government and Plan, with the support of the Ministry of Health (MoH).
- Working with government partners to influence government planning and funding decision making processes by facilitating district governments to develop the necessary budgeting skills, knowledge and confidence to navigate the complex government planning and budgeting approval processes (refer to the 'Deeper into influencing strategies' section).
- Developing local government staff knowledge, understanding and skills to implement STBM policies and strategies at district, sub-district and village levels to coordinate and lead STBM implementation and strengthen STBM legislation at district level. This included a suite of trainings, mentoring, coordinating meetings, and learning events. The STBM trainings adopted a cascading training of trainers (TOT) process for all 5 STBM pillars. To ensure the quality of the training was maintained, there were minimum standards that each TOT followed. Monthly STBM meetings at the different sub-national levels also helped gauge the level of common understanding amongst government partners.
- Enhancing gender and social inclusion within STBM policy and practice to better address the underlying barriers for the most marginalised. This is achieved by integrating gender responsive WASH approaches together with gender and disability specific interventions, for example, through the use of the Gender and WASH Monitoring Tool (GWMT) (Plan 2011). Whilst the GWMT collects useful strategic gender data, its primary aims are to improve the gender analysis skills of Plan and Government partners and to provide space for women and men in communities to discuss their experiences in gender relations and setting their own aspirations for change.

After three years of implementation, this project has already achieved significant results, providing strong evidence of the effectiveness of the project's strategies. These results include:

- All 5 district governments have prepared 5-year action plans for STBM in the project's target villages, which are currently being implemented.

- All 5 district governments and sub-district governments are replicating their STBM roles and responsibilities in replication areas (i.e. areas outside those directly targeted by the project).
- One district (Ende) government has legislated within their STBM District Law that any new public toilets built must be disability inclusive, gender responsive and disaster resilient.
- Currently there are a total of 242 villages (demonstration and replication) that have been declared as STBM villages (i.e. practicing all 5 pillars habitually), with 363,000 people. This includes 169 replication villages (of which 92 have been declared as STBM villages to date).

Deeper into influencing strategies

Looking deeper into the second project strategy (i.e. working with government partners to influence government planning and funding decision making processes), this section steps through the series of interventions used at the district and sub-district level.

Firstly, Plan together with district WASH working groups and sub-district STBM teams mapped the current government planning and funding decision making processes. Such processes were not straight forward to map as they can vary from district to district. In general Indonesia's budgeting process is conducted in a bottom-up manner from sub-district level up to district level with a series of planning and budgeting process meetings participated by government officials and stakeholders (Anwar and Sunaji 2008). The budgeting cycle takes place every year and simultaneously across Indonesia, and is a series of sequential stages (as seen in Figure 1).

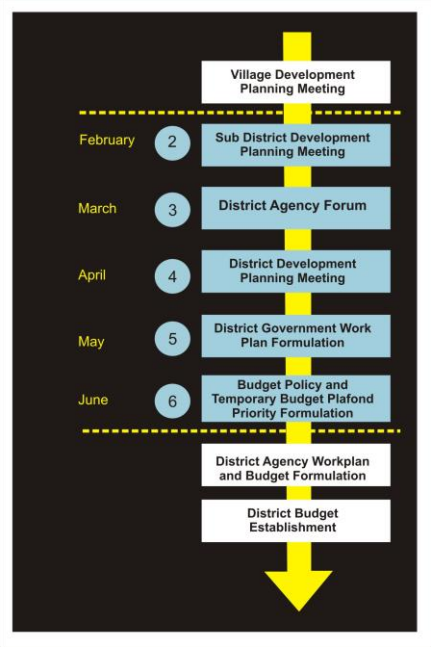

Figure 1. District and sub-district planning and budgeting cycle

Source: Adapted from Anwar and Sunaji 2008

Following the mapping process, discussions were held between Plan and district and sub-district WASH working group/STBM team members to identify the most strategic places and timing to influence the government's annual planning and funding decision making process. Further, understanding who the key decision making bodies were within these stages was important to preparing how to best intervene. There was consensus that Stages 2-6 (as seen in blue boxes within Figure 1) were the key points where the project could intervene to influence government to safeguard funds for STBM prioritisation. Within these stages it was identified that the key decisions and control of resources rested with legislative and executive members and certain government departments at sub-district and district level.

To ensure government district WASH working groups and sub-district STBM teams felt equipped to enter these forums (i.e. Stages 2-6) to advocate to their government counterparts, Plan worked with these partners

to strengthen the necessary skills, including negotiation skills and knowledge about STBM. Once this was undertaken, district WASH working groups and sub-district STBM teams felt more confident to enter Stages 2-6 and seek to influence their government counterparts. More specifically about the Stages:

Stage 2 – Sub-district Development Planning Meeting (*Musrembang Kecamatan*)

These meetings are open forums where different government departments and community representatives are able to propose to the sub-district government different priorities for the upcoming year. Hence this is a competitive and political process by which different options are openly debated and defended. The sub-district STBM teams under the Plan project were able to present a compelling case for the need to prioritise STBM, allowing the STBM 'proposal' to be recommended to Stage 3.

Stage 3 – District Agency Forum (*SKPD Forum*)

In this forum, proposals that have been recommended from the sub-district development planning meetings are again openly discussed and debated. District WASH working group members attended these forums and were able to speak out strongly about the importance of STBM. They were able to influence this process and the STBM proposal was recommended to be included in the district development plans by the District Government Development Departments (*SKPD*).

Stage 4 –District Development Planning Meeting (*Musrembang Kabupaten*)

This is a district-wide development planning meeting attended by all district government departments. Meeting participants discuss all recommendations for development from district level stakeholders. It is thus the most critical meeting as decisions are made for up to five year by the government. During this meeting, district WASH working group members argued for STBM to be included into the district work plans. This advocacy was successful and allowed for STBM to be included into the Sub-National Mid-Term Development Plan (*RPJMD*) which is proposed to be funded by the government for a five year period.

Stage 5 – District Government Work and Planning Meeting (*Penyusunan RKPD)*

In this meeting, the District Government Development Department members discuss detailed aspects of the Sub-National Mid-Term Development Plans to be carried out for the upcoming year, and allocate budget for each activity. At this step, District WASH working group members had to ensure that STBM activities agreed in Stage 4 are allocated adequate budget by the government for the upcoming one year. The Sub-National Mid-Term Development Plans and their allocated budget and then presented to district legislative members for approval (in Stage 6).

Stage 6 – Budget Policy and Temporary District Priority Budget Formulation (*Penyusunan KUA-PPAS)*

This stage is a political negotiation process between district executive and legislative members who discuss the proposed Sub-National Mid-Term Development Plans and budget allocations. As this is a closed meeting it is important the details in the Sub-National Mid-Term Development Plans are clear about the importance of STBM and the way it should be implemented.

Results of influencing

The project's strategies for influencing government planning and funding decision making processes (together with the other key project strategies), as undertaken by Plan and Government partners, has resulted in significant outcomes to date. In particular, 5-year government funding for STBM implementation has been secured across the project's five target districts. This has allowed district WASH working groups and sub-district STBM teams to progress implementing their STBM roles and responsibilities in accordance to the STBM policy outside of the areas directly targeted by the project using government funding (i.e. replication). To date STBM replication has extended to 169 villages across the five NTT districts (Table 1).

Table 1. District budget allocation for STBM replication

District	Government Budget Allocation (2013) USD	Government Budget Allocation (2016) USD	Number of STBM replication villages by government
Ende	5,000	34,615	31
East Manggarai	1,500	42,000	60
Ngada	1,250	8,769	20
Kupang	2,000	27,230	40
Sabu	1,500	23,076	18
Total	**11,250**	**135,690**	**169**

Lessons learned

The project's strategies, particularly the STBM influencing efforts, have provided several lessons learned to date. Influencing the district and sub-district government planning and resourcing decisions would not have been possible without active and motivated district and sub-district WASH Working Groups/STBM teams. Together with these partners, Plan was able to strengthen the skills and competencies needed for the required knowledge, communication and negotiation skills to influence key budget and planning Stages 2-6. The internal competition for resources within these government forums should not be underestimated, and district and sub-district WASH Working Groups/STBM teams had rarely spoken out at these forums previously. Plan observed that the confidence of these partners grew as their knowledge and skills improved.

Another key reflection is that having a MoU agreement in place at the commencement of the project to obtain the government's upfront commitment was a solid foundation to start from. This could have been further strengthened if the district executives and legislative members were also 'triggered' upfront. An informed understanding of STBM could have helped strengthen negotiations during the final stage of budget/planning approval (Stage 6). This assertion could also be extended out to the other key actors of government planning and decision making involved in Stages 2-6. Whilst it is not realistic to expect all these Government bodies to commit upfront, the project had a missed opportunity to involve them more during STBM project implementation which may have given them a better insight into STBM and further influence going development processes within government.

Mapping and understanding the Government's planning and decision making cycle was one of the contributors to success. It was important to understand what and how to intervene. Further, the timing of advocacy was important for each Stage to ensure there were no missed opportunities, otherwise it would have been difficult to influence decisions that had been made at a particular Stage. In addition, had STBM priorities been omitted in the 5-year funding cycle, it would have been very difficult to influence the government's resources until the next funding cycle.

Looking forward

Plan and GoI at the various levels, particularly at the sub-national level, continue to work in partnership for improving sanitation and hygiene in the five districts in NTT province. The project's current priority is to ensure the STBM plans formulated as part of the 5-year government action plans continue to be implemented. Plan has been progressively 'stepping back' and monitoring progress as the government's WASH Working Groups and STBM teams become increasingly more functional to undertake their roles and responsibilities in line with the STBM policy.

Conclusion

Indonesia needs to tackle its sanitation and hygiene crisis in effective, scalable and cost-effective ways. Whilst the country's 2019 Universal Sanitation target is ambitious, opportunities to accelerate progress at the local level should be seized upon. The STBM policy can provide this if it is operationalised in ways that focus on government-led approaches, sustainability and quality. The combination of strategies used in Plan

Indonesia's project is proving to be successful, particularly its efforts to influence government planning and decision making processes. More importantly, it is contributing to improving institutional sustainability beyond the project's timeframe and benefiting the underserved areas of NTT. The project's strategies, together with a number of lessons for applying practical advocacy influencing models, can be of use for sector practitioners wishing to pursue similar approaches or facing similar issues with local governments.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to extend thanks to the active and driven district, sub-district and village WASH working groups/STBM teams in Ende, East Manggarai, Ngada, Kupang and Sabu district. Thanks also to John Kelleher (Senior Program Manager –WASH at Plan) for reviewing this paper.

References

Anwar, Z. & Sunaji (Ed), 2008. *Menabur Benih di Ladang Tandus: Pelajaran Berharga Advokasi Perencanaan dan Penganggaran di Kabupaten Bantul dan Kabupae Kebumen.* Yogyakarta: IRE & NDI.

National Water and Sanitation Group, 2014. *2019, 100% Indonesia Underserved Public Access Water and Improved Sanitation*, May 2014, Available from: http://www.ampl.or.id/read_article/2019-100-masyarakat-indonesia-terlayani-akses-air-minum-dan-sanitasi-layak/37949

Plan Indonesia, 2013. *WASH Situational Analysis.* Jakarta: Plan Indonesia.

Plan Australia, 2011. *Gender and WASH Monitoring Tool.* Melbourne: Plan Australia.

UNICEF and WHO, 2015. *Progress on Drinking Water and Sanitation.* Edition: 2015 Update and MDG Assessment. Geneva: WHO.

UNICEF and WHO, 2014. *Progress on Drinking Water and Sanitation*. Edition: 2014 Update. Geneva: WHO.

Contact details

Herie Ferdian
WASH Coordinator
Plan Indonesia.
Tel : +628212-717-6735
Email: herie.ferdian@plan-international.org
www.plan-indonesia.org

Lee Leong
Senior Advisor –WASH
Plan Australia.
Tel: +61 3 9672 3649
Email: lee.leong@plan.org.au
https://www.plan.org.au/