**April 2016 Latrine Project Guide & Case Study mix**

**By PCV Tesia Eisenberg**

**Introduction**

Dear reader, this case study is going to be a mix of a guide and of looking at my personal experience doing a latrine project in Senegal. Make sure before you start that you contact the Grant Team to find out when the grant cycle deadlines for WASH projects are most likely to come around. Also contact the Health Tech Team to let them know you are starting a latrine project so that they can advise as the project progresses.

**Baseline Survey**

Get to know your community at a demographics level. Why? So that you know what resources are available and who has access to them. Immediately after I installed into my site my community leaders expressed a need for latrines. After PST 2 I did a baseline survey to fully understand this community need. It gave me the information I needed: which households had access to latrines, what the community understood about the importance of hand washing and using a latrine, and where people went to use the restroom when they didn’t have a latrine. After the baseline survey was completed and the numbers put together I sent in the results to the Health Tech Team and explained that I was about to start a latrine project because it was obvious through the baseline survey that the community was both motivated and in need of this project.

**WASH BCC/Test of motivation**

The most important part of any latrine project is the WASH behavior Change Communication, which happens, before, during, and after the actual construction of the latrines. After PST 2 (also known as IST) I started my WASH BCC with a health talk on the importance of washing hands and followed it up with a Tippy Tap construction training. Although my community communicated a large interest in building Tippy Taps, only one was built during the following month. I then sat down with my host father and explained the importance of proper hand washing and stated that without this change in behavior I did not see enough motivation in the community to do a latrine project. One week later I was consistently building Tippy Taps throughout my village. I also trained two women in my village to be able to build the Tippy Taps and train others so that the knowledge would remain in the community when I wasn’t available. I also co-organized a WASH Training of Trainers event with two other PCVs targeting two counterparts for each of our communities who would then be responsible to convey the knowledge they learned at this training to the communities that they lived in.

**Community Organization**

Once you have results from your community proving their motivation, it’s time to choose your counterparts for the latrine project. This is a long term project so be sure to choose people who are motivated, proven to be hard workers, and good at getting the community mobilized. My project was funded through World Connect. They require a local Chief of the Project and like to see a local community group as part of the project planning as well, such as a women’s group or a health committee. In my village existed the Gagnick Health Committee that had been functioning for multiple years and was proven to be reliable with money and motivated partners. They were given the responsibility of collecting the community contribution, organizing and paying the brick makers for their work, and telling the Masons the order of households in which to build latrines. I chose my host father for the Chief of the Project because he was the previous president of the health committee and had a lot of experience in community mobilization.

Once the community counterparts are chosen, it’s important for the chief of the project and perhaps the president of the local community organization to meet with the Masons ahead of time to agree a price for latrine construction. Do not take this responsibility on yourself! Although you should be present, it’s up to your community counterparts to negotiate a price that is fair to the mason but achievable for each household to pay for the construction of their latrine. The mason construction fee is the 10% cash community contribution of your project. My mason and community agreed to 7,500 CFA per latrine but since then, new latrine projects are seeing masons agree to a minimum of 10,000 CFA per latrine. Once this is decided it’s time to meet with the whole community.

At your community meeting it’s important to explain the parameters of the project such as the type of latrine and how many latrines your project will encompass. After that is made clear continue with what the project will provide such as cement, metal, and PVC pipe (if you are doing a ventilated latrine). After this comprehension is confirmed next talk about the expectations of the community such as the mason fee, transportation of materials, sand, gravel, and digging their own hole for the latrine. Besides the mason fee all of the previous listed items are in-kind contributions. I also highly recommend using a voucher system (check the end of this document for the one I created as an example). The voucher lists everything the community needs to accomplish before they can get the supplies for their latrine. Once a household has fulfilled their voucher the PCV and the chief of the project sign it and then they are allowed to receive supplies.

There will be lots of questions and clarifications even with a fluent speaker. I explained everything at my community meeting and then had my Chief of the Project re-state what I had said in proper and clear local language. There was definitely increased comprehension when the item had been re-stated by my counterpart. I also brought in a PC Staff member to go over the project again once the grant had gone through and I had received the money. This lent authority and clarity to my project.

The most important item to re-iterate at the end of the meeting is the collection of the mason fee. The local community group needs to collect the mason fees before you write your grant. This will tell you who is truly motivated and will give you an accurate number of how many latrines to build. Under personal lessons I will explain in more detail under Personal Lessons why this is so important and what happens when you don’t do this. My suggestion is during the community meeting set a deadline where by interested households will have to pay part or the whole mason fee. If a household doesn’t pay the fee by that time, they are not truly motivated and do not get to be part of the project. This may seem harsh, but trust me they will pay it if they are truly motivated.

**Grant Application**

So, you have your number of households participating and are ready to write your grant application. Hopefully, you have been communicating with the Grant Team to know when to apply to a grant that would fund your latrine project. I did not do this and I had to wait an additional 6 months to start my project, which truly affected my timeline. Make sure to go over your budget with your own mason and Chief of the Project and then double, triple check it. Do not depend solely on another volunteer’s budget as mistakes happen. Depending on the funder you are applying to, there will be different questions in the application and they change from year to year. I suggest choosing a time to go online and copy down all the questions. You will need answers from the community, so plan to go back to site to fill out the questions then return to the regional house to actually fill out the grant application. Depending on your diligence, it may take a few days to complete so keep that in mind as the deadline approaches. The funder may also want to clarify a few of your answers, so leave time in the application for that or you may be waiting longer to receive your grant money.

Now, after you have submitted your application and you are nervously waiting for the grant to be accepted it’s a good time to do more WASH BCC. These trainings were required for the households participating in my latrine project. Subjects I included in trainings: germ theory explanation, hand washing, open defecation, and maintaining/cleaning your latrine. My latrine grant application was due May 1st and I received my funds mid-July. There is time to do a few trainings before the funds arrive, unless this time coincides with Ramadan. If that is the case, wait ‘til the end of Ramadan to do your trainings.

Congratulations! Your grant was accepted! Now it’s time to have another meeting with the community reminding them of what’s on the voucher and telling them the timeline to buy supplies and start construction. Tell them to start digging their holes, first come first served by the brick makers and masons. Note that nothing is accomplished during Ramadan, so plan accordingly. Also, keep in mind that although you can buy supplies during rainy season you can’t build until the harvest is completed. As much as people want a latrine, their means of income comes first and no one will be available to build during the Rainy or Harvest Season.

Although it’s recommended to hold on to the grant money yourself, take your counterpart with you to buy supplies and organize transportation. Your counterpart will make sure you get fair prices. I had originally planned to buy supplies in four separate visits due to the size of my grant, but ended up buying supplies in two visits due to the high price of transportation and the reduced number of latrines we ended up building. It depends on the size of your project, transport price, storage facility, and distance how many supply runs you want to make but most likely it will be best to buy in two or more separate visits. I also kept my grant money in the bank until I knew I would be using it so that I reduced the likelihood of it getting stolen. If you do this, make sure you understand the exact amount of CFA in your account from the grant versus your own funds to avoid spending money that isn’t yours. When the money isn’t in the bank, keep it under lock and key. Also when you buy supplies or pay brick makers, **don’t forget to get a signed receipt with a phone number that clearly states the funds used and the items bought for both individual units and a total price!** Although I never had a problem with receipts, I did see what could happen through another volunteer’s project when they couldn’t easily account for all money they used in their receipts. It’s not only unprofessional but is also fraud.

**Construction**

This is the easy part, or should be once the holes are dug as long as in preparation supplies were already bought, trainings held, and mason fees collected. Assuming it’s not a season that would prevent construction, the brick makers can make enough bricks for one household in 1-2 days and then the bricks need to lie out for a few days. The price of labor for bricks is 1,000 CFA per sack of cement. After the bricks are ready, the mason constructs the latrine. My mason has been constructing latrines at a rate of one latrine every two days. It goes fast, the only hold up being a household taking their time to dig the hole. If they really seem lax, it might be wise to tell them that another household will take their place if they don’t get it done by a certain date (and mean it). Also, take photos for the funding organization.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

Before starting WASH BCC take a look at the following indicators as all of them may be used to report indicators addressed in your VRF depending on the aspects of your latrine project:

Goal: Community members adopt water and sanitation hygiene practices and behaviors resulting in improving health. Indicators: HE-47: Constructed or improved water and sanitation systems HE-62: People in Households having access to latrines

Goal: Community members adopt water and sanitation hygiene practices and behaviors resulting in improving health. Indicators: HE-049: Trained people to build hand washing stations and to correctly wash their hands. HE-202 PDI: Community members attending WASH behavior change communication- number of individuals receiving BCC/IEC (Behavior change communication) outreach promotion wash. HE-052: Households having hand washing station with soap and safe water. HE-053: Household members using the hand washing station.

Definitely leave yourself enough space in the timeline to fulfill M&E aspects of the project. Besides reporting on your VRF, it helps to see the overall impact you have made and to keep yourself accountable to the sustainability and durability of your project.

**Personal Lessons learned**

1. I had thought based on my PST 1 training I could apply for a latrine grant at any time and because of this idea I missed the fall deadline pushing my whole timeline back where it conflicted with the Rainy season and my vacation. When I applied for a World Connect Grant it was for 82 latrines and I had hoped to get the money by June so I could start before the Rainy season. My money came mid-July aka Rainy season had started. I also was involved in other group projects during August. I did however hold a Soap making training in the beginning of September but I didn’t require the women to put in money and due to this they never continued to try and make soap.
2. Instead of using this time to collect participation fees, I told people at an August community meeting to wait until I came back from my vacation, which lasted mid-September to mid-October. Again, when I came back my time was taken up with another project ‘til the end of October. This turned out to be my biggest mistake as people had to be pressured to get their mason fees in so that we could buy supplies for the right amount of households.
3. November 3rd I went with my host father to buy enough supplies for 20 latrines. It was at the boutique that we learned the delivery price was 8,000 CFA one time fee. We had to charge an extra 300 CFA per person to cover this transport fee.
4. As the masons got ready to start construction they came to us and told us in no compromising terms that having 8 sacks of cement is not enough for the dimensions of 2m wide by 2m long by 2m deep. They said it wouldn’t be structurally sound. I called the volunteer whom I had originally based my budget and dimensions off of. She put her mason on the phone and he admitted that he had actually been building 1.5m by 1.5m and 2m deep. Even so, my mason didn’t think it would be sustainable as it wasn’t structurally durable doing those dimensions with rebar #8. We needed rebar #10. I took a look at the actual prices from the boutique and found that the volunteer I got the budget from overestimated the price of the PVC pipe. There was not enough money for rebar #10 but there was enough to add another sack of cement and 3 more bars of rebar #8 to the latrines. If we added that sack and rebar we could make the latrines durable. We also used 0.5m of the original 2m of PVC pipe that each household received to create a seat that was built to the side of the drop hole. The drop hole was connected by the 0.5m of PVC pipe to the cement seat changing it from a simple ventilated latrine into a ventilated latrine with a side PVC pipe connected seat.
5. It wasn’t until mid-March that a household pointed out that the new design required another piece, a curved PVC pipe for 1,500 CFA. We had no room in the budget so each individual household had to buy that separately. This also delayed the finishing up of the project. I paid 3,000 CFA of my own money to buy two more, one for a school latrine and one for a case de santé latrine that we were building.
6. The year before (2014) the rains had been poor and the harvest season was over by the first week of November. I planned my latrine construction timeline according to this experience after the money came in mid-July. To my astonishment the rains were much better this time around and the harvest season lasted into the end of December. It was extremely hard to get latrines done during this time. Most of the latrine construction happened during January-March 2016. People were slow to dig their holes and slow to pay the mason fee. I finally had to set a deadline for participating in the project and stated that at least half of the money had to be paid by February 10th or they wouldn’t get a latrine. It became apparent that I would only be completing half of my budgeted project.
7. Also delaying the construction was that our originally designated mason decided in frustration with our delayed timeline to take a job in Mauritania and abandon our project. The second chosen mason constructed 7 latrines out of the ten he was pre-paid to do before he also chose to work on a more lucrative project. He did eventually come back to build 3 more, but this taught me not to pre-pay anyone for their work. By this time a third mason had returned to the village after doing other work and was hired to finish out a total of 42 latrines.
8. Everyone will tell you they want a latrine and will commit to one, but when the actual money comes only half of the people will actually do what they need to do to get a latrine. That’s why it’s so important to get at least a partial financial commitment from participating households before writing the grant. Once they become financially involved, they will see it through to completion. Personally, this also caused me a lot of stress as I had enough money for 82 latrines but was only going to accomplish 42 of them before my COS date. On March 1st I was struggling to fill those 42 spots so I gave 4 households in a neighboring community the chance to be part of the latrine project. They luckily were so excited they got their latrines completely done in two weeks.
9. You should never have a timeline that leaves your latrine project to a replacement volunteer. They don’t have the language or technical skills to come in as a brand new volunteer and take up the slack of your latrine project. It also looks very bad for PC to return large amounts of unused funds to the funding partner. Luckily for me I came up with the solution of transferring my grant to a site-mate one year into her service that wanted to do a latrine grant. Both PC and World Connect agreed to this transfer, making it possible. That volunteer has already started construction as she started collecting mason fees as soon as we started working on the transfer. Her project is going much more smoothly.
10. I learned from this experience that really no volunteer has enough time from the time they apply for a grant to the time the latrines are completed to do a well thought out latrine project of more than 30 latrines. The Peace Corps Grant Team agrees with me and is now putting contemplating what the actual maximum of latrines should be for one PCV’s latrine project.
11. My site will have 42 when they are done, but I will have COSed before the last latrine is fully built. My community has all the tools to complete the project and is far enough along that they will be done before my replacement arrives, but it’s disappointing to not be able to see the last latrine finished.

**Miscellaneous**

The more WASH BCC you do, the more successful your latrine project will be. So, I have added on a few programming ideas to take your latrine project to the next level.

School Programming: School counterparts are very receptive to working with PCVs. Children are also more receptive than adults to WASH behavior change. In my case, I built Tippy Taps with my local elementary school and did a health talk about the importance of hand washing. The school still uses the Tippy Taps, the children still sing the song I taught them to sing when washing their hands, and some of the children built Tippy Taps in their own households.

Soap making trainings: Reach out to your local women’s group and see if they would be willing to put in a hundred CFA each (or a little more) to do a soap making training that could then lead to a soap making and selling business venture. This will increase the soap in the community, is another chance to talk about hand washing, provides more income to the women’s group, and empowers the women in the group. If they agree, then reach out to a local CED volunteer to co-ordinate and organize the training.

Youth Clubs: Do a health talk with your English Club, Girls’ Club, or start a Health Club. This is a good way to further WASH practices in a fun and relaxed environment while also working and empowering the local youth. They can then spread the knowledge by doing skits where they impart the knowledge to the greater community.

**Conclusion**

At this point, you have learned all the advice I have to give. Hopefully your latrine project will progress more smoothly and calmly than mine did. Below are a few appendices that may help such as: my latrine voucher, budget, and timeline. The Google Folder also has a WASH Training outline and you can ask the Grant Team to send you a specific volunteer’s grant application for an example if needed. Good luck and I wish you a great service!

Appendix I. Latrine Voucher example with original English translation.

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Project Latrine pour les villages de Gagnick Mack et Seindiegne de la Commune de Gagnick

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 **SENEGAL**

**In order to receive supplies for a simple ventilated latrine of 2mx2mx2m the family concerned must first get all items below accomplished and signed by Penda Diouf**

**Pour obtenir une latrine de 2m x 2m x 2m la famille concernée doit remplir le questionnaire suivant qui sera signe par Penda Diouf et Ibrahima Diouf**

1. **Condition d’adhésion**
* Paid the Mason 7,500cfa Donner la participation de 7,500cfa
* Brought Sand to the Latrine location Amener du sable, du gravier, du l’eau pour la construction de la latrine
* Dug a Latrine Pit at least 2meters deep Creuser un faussée de 2metre de hauteur
* Paid 100cfa participation for the school latrine Donner la participation de 100cfa pour la latrine de l’Ecole et 100cfa pour la Case de Sante
1. **Les règles pratiques à obéir**
* Have a functional Tippy Tap with Soap Disposer d’un Tippy Tap et savon dans la maison
* Helped with gathering needed materials for the latrine de l’ecole et latrine de Case de Sante and Construire a premier lieu les latrines de l’Ecole et de la Case de Sante, les 80 familles inscrites dans le projet doivent amener de l’eau, du sable, du gravier, des palissades, et creuser les faussée de ces deux infrastructures
* At least 1 woman from the family has attended the Latrine Causerie presented by Ndeye Dia and Yande Diouf Une personne de la famille doit participer a la causerie sur l’hygiène et assainissement animer par Ndeye Dia et Ndeye Yande Diouf
* Helped with the transportation of supplies as requested by Penda Diouf, Ibrahima Diouf, and/or … Les familles qui disposent de moyen de transport c’est a dire charrette doivent appuyer Penda Diouf et Ibrahima Diouf pour le transport du matériels du projet

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Prénom et Nom de Volontaire Signature du Volontaire La Date

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Prénom et Nom de Chef de Ménage Signature du Chef de Ménage La Date

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Prénom et Nom du Chef de Projet Signature du Chef du Projet La Date

Appendix II. Budget Example-There were mistakes so don’t copy it verbatim



Appendix III.

**Timeline**

**Prior to April 2015**

* Complete Latrine Baseline Survey
* WASH Trainings: germ theory, hand washing, open defecation vs. latrine
* TOT WASH Training
* Tippy Tap Construction
* School WASH Programs
* Hold Community meeting to make sure everyone is on the same page
* Make Budget for Latrine Project

**April 30th, 2015**

* Grant Application Submission

**May 2015**

* World Connect asks a few clarifying questions

**June**

* Receive word that the grant is accepted

**July**

* Receive grant funds

**August**

* Community meeting with PTA Adji Thiaw

**September/October**

* Soap making Training coordinated with CED volunteer
* Additional Tippy Tap construction
* Go on vacation which put everything on hold

**November**

* Buy materials for 20 latrines
* Start making bricks for latrines

**December**

* Make bricks for latrines

**January**

* Start building latrines

**February**

* Last chance for households to participate in project by giving mason fee
* Collect last supplies for latrines
* Build latrines

**March**

* Continue building latrines
* Take photos of families with completed latrines
* One last WASH training on latrine maintenance

**April/May**

* Finish building latrines
* Monitor and Evaluation of the project