

Introduction

Community Health Clubs (CHC) are a **grassroots education and behavior change strategy** that enable resource-poor communities to **address root causes of morbidity and mortality, and organize for self-initiated development**¹. Health clubs develop people's capacity and problem-solving abilities and establish enduring social structures dedicated to community health that may ultimately reduce dependence on outside assistance. Pioneered in Zimbabwe in 1995 to address inadequate water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), this approach is also proving effective in Haiti.

Since 2012, the Center for Medical Humanities & Ethics (CMHE) and the Eco-Eau et Jeunesse organization (EEJ) have trained and mentored **over 80 Community and School Health Clubs benefiting an estimated 17,000 individuals** in Port-au-Prince, Mirebalais, and Cabaret. CHCs were designed to not only achieve WASH behavioral changes, but to also become **grassroots organizations that enhance community-based management** and serve as **vehicles for self-initiated health and development initiatives**. The CHC's ability to stimulate WASH knowledge and behaviors in Haiti and elsewhere has been documented^{2,3}. Less well documented is the model's ability to provide effective community-based WASH management and development leadership.

Community-based WASH management arose in response to the **deficiencies of centralized supply driven approaches** that dominated the sector until the mid to late 1980's^{4,5}. Experts anticipated that decentralized, community-based approaches would: **1) enhance technical performance** and **2) improve financial sustainability**⁴. Although there is some evidence that community-driven or community-based approaches have worked, the majority of assessments have identified **problems and limitations with the technical and fiscal capacity of communities, and structural/institutional issues**^{4,6}. As a result, many within the sector now view the creation of **sustainable business models as the dominant paradigm** in service provision, in particular for the urban poor⁷.

We believe that there is still a role for community-based management in urban and rural WASH programs utilizing the CHC model. Our work in Haiti demonstrates both the potential and limitations for community-based WASH management and leadership.

CHC Executive Committees

The long term goal of the model is for each CHC to become a community-based organization that **leads and manages all health and development activities**. The Club achieves this goal through 3 interrelated mechanisms: 1) the growth of **'common-unity'** amongst members, 2) creation of a Club **constitution**, and 3) leadership by a **democratically elected and trained Executive Committee (EC)**. So what is the EC and how does it work?

WHO? The members of the EC must be **registered Club members** and include:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Club Facilitator
- Counselors



WHAT? The members of the EC fulfil the following **roles and responsibilities**:

- Program monitoring
- Strategic leadership
- Community-based management of WASH facilities
- Fiscal oversight/management
- External partnership development
- Community surveillance



HOW?

- ECs are elected after 2 months of Club meetings (the WASH curriculum is 6 months)
- One full day EC training workshop
 - Community Needs/Assets Assessment
 - Basic Skills/Knowledge
 - Roles & Responsibilities



Zimbabwe



5 ECs built a community center in rural Matabeleland

South Africa



ECs lead self-supply water improvements in rural Umzimkhulu

Burkina Faso



ECs lead production & sales of shea butter soap in rural Dierma

Executive Committees in Haiti

Table 1: Clubs Formed and Executive Committee's Trained (2012-2016)

Year	# Facilitators Trained	# Clubs Formed	# ECs Trained	# EC Members Trained
2012 – 2013	3	6	-	-
2013 – 2014*	55	40	28	196
2014 – 2015†	67	54	33	231
2015 – 2016‡	13	51	5	35
2016	62	20	20	126
Total	200	171	86	588

*Includes Clubs formed by Living Water International (LWI), EEJ as technical experts

†Includes Clubs formed by LWI and America Solidaria, EEJ as technical experts

‡Includes Clubs formed by America Solidaria, EEJ as technical experts

Successes

Zafé Kabrit se Zafé Mouton! – The Business of the Goat is the Business of the Sheep

- Social solidarity & a sense of common-unity has been generated
- Organization of social events: Mothers day, birthdays, vacations

WASH Products & Infrastructure

- Kouzin Dlo partnership: water treatment education & distribution
- Living Water International: management of boreholes,
- Latrine construction projects

Communal Clean-Up Campaigns

- Mobilize members
- Mobilize city/private garbage trucks

Small Business Development/Vocational Skill Training

- Artisanal products based upon previous knowledge & skills of members
- Diffusing skills through training in PAP Clubs

Micro-Credit Programs

- Self-initiated program in post-earthquake settlement Canaan
- \$2 contribution for Club programs, micro-loans & emergency support for members

Education & Literacy

Challenges

Urban WASH infrastructure limitations

Committee Processes & Policies

Power sharing

- Dynamics between facilitators & committees
- Attempts to hijack initiatives & opportunities

Limited Mentorship & Support

- One day of training is insufficient
- Limited opportunity to meet and share experiences

Decline of Volunteer Spirit in Haiti

Incentives & Demotivation



Communal clean up with garbage truck



Beaded sandals & bags

Lessons Learned

- Clubs appear to **create genuine community engagement** & motivate members to improve their lives/community
- ECs demonstrate **independence & self-initiative**
- Urban context limits potential for WASH management
 - Each community is different; **cannot impose specific activities**
- Implementing agencies can & should **facilitate partnerships for EC**
- All Club leaders must **know their roles** (eg: facilitators, EC, members)
- **More training, mentorship** & opportunities for EC collaboration is required
 - With training, **responsibilities are clear** & ECs are more effective
- Facilitate **establishment of consistent EC procedures, policies and constitutions**

Discussion

CHCs in urban Haiti **have not played a significant role in community-based WASH management**. This is mostly due to the fact that members in urban communities have **less locus of control**. Space, overcrowding and land ownership issues limit the ability for Clubs to address sanitation, while water is now mostly available via water treatment kiosks³. This could also be a reflection of the **limited technical training specific to WASH management**. As a result, the urban Clubs have chosen to focus on **addressing development services** that do not exist or enhancing services that are weak: environmental management, income generation and skills development. The Clubs and their ECs have **shown great innovation and independence**, developing and implementing community-based development programs. As Harvey and Reed pointed out, if one of our goals is to empower communities to take control over their development, then **they should be able to choose NOT to manage their water supply and sanitation services**⁵. We are seeing this with urban Clubs in Haiti who are **bypassing direct WASH management** and leveraging their leadership to address WASH deficiencies through **market mechanisms and collaborations** with non-profit service providers. However, in **peri-urban areas** we are seeing Clubs effectively manage WASH facilities and we expect this trend to continue in rural areas. We are currently implementing the first program in rural Haiti and we will have results to share by the summer of 2017. Community management is complex and context specific. We believe that Clubs provide a vehicle for effective community empowerment and development leadership.

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