



CASE STUDY



Sanitation Marketing

Community Based Sanitation Enterprises delivering WASH outcomes in Fiji

Live & Learn improved sanitation in seven informal peri-urban settlements in the Suva-Nausouri area of Fiji through the establishment of a Community Based Sanitation Enterprise to sell affordable sanitation products.

Past attempts to improve sanitation in the South Pacific using external handouts and subsidies have not always been successful and positive gains made are usually not sustained. Acknowledging these weaknesses, Live & Learn made a bold decision to pilot sanitation marketing. Market-based mechanisms can increase local ownership and rapidly and efficiently scale-up the reach of sanitation activities. Sanitation marketing and CBSEs have been successful in other regions of the world; however, this is a new approach for Fiji and the South Pacific.

The development of the Community Based Sanitation Enterprise was supported by the Australian government through the Civil Society WASH Fund.

Introducing the Fiji Community Based Sanitation Market (CBSM)

Live & Learn collaborated with the Peoples Community Network, an NGO that works with informal settlements and the Local Government ministry to create the Community Based Sanitation Market (CBSM) and fill CBSM roles with the confirmation of the community. The CBSM was registered in June 2016 as a partnership business and was the first ever community owned sanitation marketing business in Fiji.

Recognising the need to build the CBSM capacity to operate a sanitation business, Live & Learn progressively delivered training, including promotion, sales, maintenance, OHS and governance.

Three directors support and oversee a sales and marketing officer.

A Trust Committee comprised of representatives from each settlement safeguards the interests of the communities.

The CBSM now operates more like a small business and positions descriptions that outline clear job roles and responsibilities help everyone to play their part in running the business. Staff are only paid a 10% commission on sales made which helps keep business overheads low.



CBSM delivers benefits to the community

Increased awareness about sanitation

CBSM activities have made it easier for community members to discuss the taboo topic of sanitation. A pastor in Kalekana settlement recently returned to his village after three years away and he indicated that more people were talking about sanitation and the consequences of poorly built toilets.

The CBSM has raised awareness at the Dawasamu Government Roadshow, Raka 7's Rugby Tournament, the Fiji WASH Summit, and World Water Day 2018, as well as through national TV and radio coverage that has both promoted the CBSM and resulted in toilet orders from outside of the target settlements.

One CBSM customer commented that

“CBSM has helped with employment as well by engaging community members as Marketing Officers and Health Workers”.

This reflects the fact that all CBSM directors and staff live in the informal settlements where the CBSM operates.

Improved hygiene and sanitation in communities

Over 165 toilets have been sold, with the Ministry of Health (MOH) being the largest purchaser of slabs and risers.

This demonstrates the ability of the CBSM to design, plan and construct improved toilet facilities to benefit communities and meet the needs of larger customers.

End-of-project monitoring found that there had been an increase in the number of households with a toilet and a handwashing facility with soap available, helping to prevent disease. The sales of soap providing a small income stream to the health workers.



Community Based Sanitation Enterprises

What is a Community Based Sanitation Enterprise?

A Community Based Sanitation Enterprise (CBSE) is a small business that uses sanitation marketing and human behaviour change concepts to create demand for improved sanitation and hygiene within their target community.

The enterprise then fills this demand for improved sanitation by selling WASH products and services (toilets, handwashing basins, soap, etc.). The enterprise may design and construct these products themselves, or they may resell existing products. The business structure for the enterprise may be a community owned enterprise/cooperative, or a small private business. The enterprise may run as a not-for-profit or for-profit business.

Happy customers with improved sanitation

The CBSM offers different toilet designs that cater for different budgets and environmental factors, including climate change related flood risks. Toilet designs include Ventilated Improved Pit (VIP), pour flush, button-flush toilets and composting toilets. The CBSM also sells slab and riser kits.

Jacinta, an elderly community leader from Veiraisi settlement, is pleased with the affordability and accessibility of CBSM products:

“Before buying a slab and riser from the CBSM, I just had a squatting slab. As I am getting older, my knees hurt more and more and squatting can be painful.

Buying the slab and riser from the CBSM meant that using the toilet is now easy and does not hurt my knees.”

The CBSM provided services to improve sanitation in twelve schools involved in the WASH in Schools project component of the WPSMIP, including for children with special needs and menstruating girls.

The CBSM also organized community clean-up days to improve drainage and amenities within the target settlements. This included painting some homes with hygiene promotion messages.



Strengthening the enabling environment for improved sanitation

Live & Learn has developed strong working relationships at the national and sub-national levels to strengthen the enabling environment for sanitation and support for the CBSM by attending Head of Department and various WASH meetings.

Close working relationships with partners has had many positive outcomes, including the Nasinu Town Council donating land for the CBSM office and sanitation park, and the MOH nominating CBSM as its preferred supplier.



Benefits for women

Gender and Social Inclusion has been mainstreamed into all aspects of the project and CBSM toilet designs consider the special needs of women, the elderly and people with disabilities,

Two women currently hold key positions of leadership within the CBSM (Director and Sales & Marketing Manager), increasing their confidence and knowledge of running a business. And women in leadership roles set a positive example for women and girls in the target communities. Men have not been excluded but work together with and are more supportive of women's leadership.



“I used to be a shy person. The CBSM given me lots and lots of confidence. Now even at my home, I started telling my husband and my two sons 'no, now we are equal in this world, now days it has to be equal, man and women'.

Decision making wherever we are needs to be inclusive all the time... Slowly my husband and even my boys, they have started changing.”

Sera Niumataiwalu, CBSM.



Sanitation Marketing and the CBSM – What next?

Live & Learn have made arrangements with enabling environment actors such as People's Community Network to provide ongoing support to the CBSM.

The Nasinu Town Council has also expressed interest in supporting the CBSM and an MOU to formalise the agreement has been proposed. The reach of the CBSM is already being expanded through assistance provided by the Raywa and Tailevu Provincial Government. The villages of Cautata, Waivou and Sawa have all requested the CBSM present their products and services to their communities.

The Subdivision Health Inspector of Rakiraki District has also expressed interest in purchasing slabs and risers.

The Ministry of Health has had discussions with Live & Learn about replicating the CBSM model in other sub-divisions around Fiji. There is also scope for the CBSM to partner with the Revitalising Informal Settlements and their Environments (RISE) project funded by Asian Development Bank.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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