

# agency news

## OXFAM

Oxfam are looking to implement a new rapid latrine system for use in emergency situations.

In emergency situations, such as a large refugee crisis, good sanitation practices and more specifically good effective excreta disposal is now recognised as being the most important factor in the prevention of diseases, especially diarrhoeas, cholera and dysentery. During the last year Oxfam has considerably increased the number of excreta disposal programmes in emergency situations. In light of the health implications of bad excreta disposal Oxfam are now committed to supplying an intergrated response of water, sanitation and hygiene promotion programmes whenever they can.

Normally, in an emergency situation, the first phase latrines Oxfam build are based on a hole design of a 4m long, by 1m wide, 3m deep trench. Over this trench, wooden slabs, stick/log slabs, concrete slabs or a small plastic slab which requires a surround and support underneath are built. These slabs are normally 1m wide by 1.2m long so that there is 10cm of the slab resting on the top of the hole at each end. After the slabs, 4 per trench, are in, a very rapid stick and plastic sheeting superstructure is constructed.

Oxfam are now trying to implement a new design. What is required is a slab, that covers the whole 1.2m by 1m area, that is easy to keep clean, durable will not rot in humid termite-infested regions, allows spillage to run back into the hole and does not need any support underneath it. This will become part of a rapid latrine kit that will include all the superstructure for a block of 4 latrines. This will enable Oxfam to very rapidly construct latrines without losing valuable time sourcing local materials and getting the slab made up. It is only envisaged that this kit will be used in the first phase of emergencies before latrine construction, slab and superstructure, can be organised locally using local materials and designs.

In addition to the improved ease of installation and efficiency of this new design, the cost of each individual plastic squatting slab would be £5.88 this compares favourably with the cost of production of the present design, which stands at just over

£10.00. The initial costs associated with making the tools and mould for the slab are approximately £57,800.

The contract for manufacture of the mould for this new design is out to tender at the moment. A manufacturer has been found for production of the slab itself. The rapid latrine slab could be in use across Oxfam's water and sanitation programme as early as the middle of this year.

## CARE INTERNATIONAL

An innovative project of CARE International which supplies clean water to a poor community in Lusaka, Zambia, reached a watershed when an agreement was reached on how its management would be handled by the local community.

The water sheme is based in Chipata compound, home to an estimated 45,000 people. About 600,000 of Lusaka's million plus population live in compounds like Chipata. Most lack clean water, sewerage, rubbish collection and electricity.

With financial support from the UK government's Department of International Development (DFID), Care Zambia's PROSPECT project (an anti-poverty programme which has been working in the area since 1992) provided boreholes and a pumping station connected by plastic pipes to 42 community tap stands in Chipata. Local residents joined in decisions as to where taps were to be located and how the scheme should operate, and the majority of households contributed labour in construction.

Households pay a modest fee to join the scheme plus a monthly fee (currently 3,000 Kwacha — about 80 pence) to receive up to 140 litres of water daily.

CARE Zambia was keen to ensure that the project would be sustainable and would eventually be under community control. It was decided to create a new commercial facility, the Chipata Community Trust, with assets owned by Lusaka Water and Sewerage Co., and given on a long lease to the trust. The trust has a majority of community members and representatives from Lusaka City Council, Lusaka Water and Sewerage Co. and CARE International, thus giving the community recognition and responsibility for water supply in the area.

## REDR

RedR — Engineers for Disaster Relief — is an international organization which relieves suffering in disasters by selecting, training and providing competent and effective non-medical personnel to humanitarian relief agencies worldwide. RedR recruits suitable people with the right qualifications and aptitudes to its register. RedR members are offered high quality training and preparation and undertake short-term assignments (usually between 3-6 months long) with front-line humanitarian relief agencies. RedR recruits have helped manage water network rehabilitations and solutions to prevent water-borne disease in Kosovo and are currently involved in the repair and supply of watsan services to displaced people in East Timor. Members are also involved in projects throughout Africa, Europe and Latin America. RedR interviews potential candidates in the UK twice a month; anyone wanting to apply should have skills appropriate for disaster management and at least 2 years work experience and a humanitarian motivation. Further information is available from [www.redr.org](http://www.redr.org) or [info@redr.demon.co.uk](mailto:info@redr.demon.co.uk)