

**LANDLORDS AND TENANTS RELATIONSHIP IN IMPROVING
SANITATION:
A CASE OF KEKO MACHUNGWA SETTLEMENT
DAR ES SALAAM**



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In informal settlements in Tanzania particularly in Dar e salaam, the common sanitation practice is the use of traditional pit latrines, many of which are poorly designed, constructed, poorly maintained and lack formal arrangements for waste disposal. Keko Machungwa is one of the informal settlements in Miburani ward located in Temeke municipality. The settlement has a population of 15,644 and 5,180 households respectively.

One among the key challenges for sanitation mentioned by Keko Machungwa community members during the study conducted by Tanzania Urban Poor Federation and Centre for Community Initiatives (CCI) in 2012 is the relationship between tenants and landlords in improving sanitation. In most practices construction and improvement of urban sanitation in informal settlements has always been the responsibilities of the landlords. This has created challenge and burden particularly in informal settlements where sanitation solutions are limited. Most houses in informal settlements in Tanzania are owned by individual landlords and rented to people within the settlements. On average about 50-70 per cent of households within the informal settlements are tenants, where one house can accommodate three to six households with a shared latrine. The landlord and tenants relationship is a critical issue in addressing sanitation in urban informal settlements because decision making regarding latrine choice and improvement is made by landlords who are also responsible for investment costs. Despite these responsibilities most landlords have not paid much attention to the improvement and construction of good toilets within their houses. Upon receiving rent which is normally paid in accrual of between 6 months – 1 year, in many cases the landlords may decide not to improve the house latrines leaving tenants with no option.

In order to address the urban sanitation challenges, a new way of thinking has been explored by the Tanzania Urban Poor Federation and CCI on the ways of involving the landlords and tenants in improving sanitation. The Tanzania Urban poor Federation had to come together with local leaders to discuss how the landlord and tenants issue can be addressed. Mobilization of both landlord and tenants was identified as a key strategy to influence toilet improvement within the community. The mobilization team includes federation members and local leaders. The team agreed to use the following approaches:

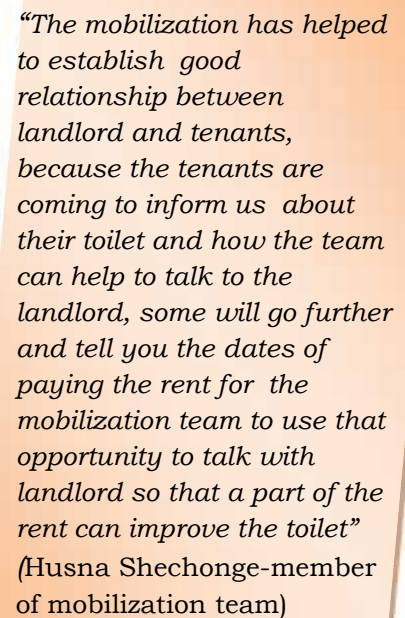
- **Community meeting;** The Councilor of the settlement held a community meeting attended by both landlords and tenants to discuss toilet improvements. A team of federation together with local leaders were able to address issues of sanitation in particular the role the landlords and tenants have in improving sanitation. The meeting provided a platform for community to have a deeper discussion on sanitation and reflect on the need to address the matter as a community rather than as an individual.

The community was informed on the opportunities available such as the loan, toilet technologies and skilled labour (technicians) who have proper training on toilet construction. Some landlords showed the interest of improving their toilet.

- **Household to household's mobilization** is another approach of reaching more people and providing time for landlords, tenants and a mobilization team to discuss issues in detail. The household's mobilization is done in two ways; (a) to those landlords and who have shown interest to improve their toilets, the team visits them for advice which includes the site inspection and toilet option which could be appropriate (b) to those who haven't shown the interest where the team has to visit them too for more mobilization, this includes those houses with tenants who are mobilized and advised on how to liaise with their landlords.

The mapping done during SHARE research has played a big role to know who has a toilet which needs to be improved hence easier to reach them. The federation technicians who reside in the settlement have also played a big role in mobilizing the community; the more they mobilize the more they get income.

- **Using events for informing and mobilizing Landlords and tenants.** The federation together with local leaders has used different events happening within community to do mobilization. Such events include the one for handing over the toilet construction equipments to beneficiaries as a way mobilizing more landlords and tenants. It has influenced some landlords and tenants to respond to the available opportunity for toilet improvement.



“The mobilization has helped to establish good relationship between landlord and tenants, because the tenants are coming to inform us about their toilet and how the team can help to talk to the landlord, some will go further and tell you the dates of paying the rent for the mobilization team to use that opportunity to talk with landlord so that a part of the rent can improve the toilet”
(Husna Shechonge-member of mobilization team)



The result of the mobilization can be noted in the case of Zaituni Mohamed 30 years old a resident of Keko machungwa who is a renting a room in a house of 11 people. She explains her ordeal of almost falling into the collapsed toilet while taking bath and how the incident gave her courage to organize fellow tenants to convince the landlord to take loan. She explains it was in the morning taking bath in the toilet which they used for bathing, just a minute after stepping out the toilet collapsed.

“I thank God because I know he was the one holding that toilet until I finished taking bath, it was a narrow escape”



Above photo: the collapsed toilet at Zaituni’s house and Zaituni sitting in front of her new toilet

Her landlord who is living somewhere else was informed and responded he had no money at that time. For Zaituni and fellow tenants it was a hard time, they decided to ask a neighbor to use the toilet temporarily while sorting out the issue. They used the toilet during daylight and during night they would use tins to ease themselves because of the security and a distance of about 15 meters. One of the tenants could no longer cope with the situation and decided to move out of the house. For Zaituni and fellow tenants it was a tough time as the choice of looking for other house to rent was difficult with fear of going into the same problem of bad toilets, where to find the room with the same rent they could afford, how quick it might take and many other unanswered questions. Zaituni knew about the provision of loan for toilet construction provided by federation.

She decided to organize other tenants, met with a mobilization team and a landlord for discussion. The landlord agreed to take loan and a rent for one room which is 50,000/=Tshs (USD 31) to be used for paying the loan which is 700,000/=Tshs (USD 432) for an Ecological sanitation toilet. The toilet was constructed and everyone in the house was happy including the landlord when he paid a visit to see the toilet.

“ I a m very happy for this new toilet because it is not smelling compared to the previous one, now I can seat in the compound and have a good rest without awful smell we used to have, it was shameful to have a visitor in such situation. The current toilet has privacy, roofed and according to technicians it will take some time to get full. The previous toilet would cost between 400,000 to 600,000/=Tshs (USD 247-371) just for repairing, the technician who constructed it made a business out of the situation because he would come and promise that this time I will make you a good toilet but it was not the case. This was the third time this toilet has collapsed” (Zaituni Mohamed).

Zaituni’s case is not much of difference with that one of Secilia Selemani Mbwana 57 years old who is a Landlord and a resident of Keko machungwa. She had the same experience of collapsed toilet in which one of a relative of her tenant fell into the toilet; luckily the neighbors were quick to rescue him from the pit. She explain that when the toilet collapsed she was devastated because she had no money at that time and she knew the absence of toilet might lead her to lose tenants especially when her neighbor started closing the toilet she requested to use at that time while looking for an alternative. She was informed about loan provided by federation and quickly she applied.

The two cases represent the role of both landlord and tenants in toilet improvements; the effort of tenants taking initiatives to discuss with landlord for toilet improvement and landlord acting on the needs and challenges of sanitation. The mobilization team has noted positive results of tenants coming out to discuss the toilet issues for more involvement of their landlords and some landlord coming to apply for toilet loan because of accessibility of loan and the pressure from tenants. For the month of September 2013, Seventeen loan applicants from Landlords were submitted in which about 510 people expected to benefit from these seventeen toilets in Keko Machungwa.

“For me toilet is very important because I had to demolish a room for renting which was at finishing stage in order to have a good, decent and secure toilet when the technicians told me I had no enough space for construction of a new one”. (Secilia Mbwana)

The case of Zaituni and Secilia reflects the key issue in improving sanitation such as the different roles played by tenants and landlords in construction and improvement of latrines. It has been established that there is a need of ensuring that all household actors including the tenants and landlords are involved in the processes. Tenants could also be used to provide information regarding available loans and finance for improving sanitation within their respective households. However, there is a question of ensuring that the landlords will not increase the costs of rents when facilities such as toilets are improved.