

414

# THE IBADAN COMFORT STATIONS

An Experiment in Environmental Sanitation Health Education

824

NG. IB75



LIBRARY  
International Reference Centre  
for Community Water Supply

## SUMMARY REPORT

*by*

ZACCHAEUS AKINGBADE ADEMUWAGUN

October, 1976

824 NG. IB.  
75-414

824  
NG. 1375

**THE IBADAN COMFORT STATIONS**  
An Experiment in Environmental Sanitation Health Education

414

**SUMMARY REPORT**

By

**LIBRARY**  
International Reference Centre  
for Community Water Supply

Zacchaeus Akingbade Ademuwagun

Address:

African Regional Health Education Centre  
Department of Preventive and Social Medicine  
Faculty of Medicine  
University of Ibadan  
Ibadan, Nigeria.

October, 1975

---

**A STUDY OF THE HEALTH EDUCATION COMPONENT  
OF THE COMFORT STATIONS IN IBADAN, NIGERIA**

**SUMMARY REPORT**

By

Dr. Zacchaeus A. Ademuwagun

October 1975

## I. ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION PROBLEMS AND THE COMFORT STATIONS IN IBADAN

### The Problem

Most of Ibadan City is plagued by problem of lack of, or inadequate, basic social developmental infrastructure. This problem is complicated by the unplanned nature of the inner core of the City. Slum and squatter settlements continue to present serious challenges to the engineers responsible for planning environmental sanitation improvement programmes. The lack of streets and alleys still preclude the construction of conventional sewage system and the routing of refuse tracks into the crowded areas of the City.

Environmental sanitation problems are particularly acute in the slum and congested inner core of the City with its open drains and insanitary disposal of human wastes. Communicable diseases - such as ascaris, hookworm, dysenteries, diarrhoea and, lately, cholera - constitute serious environmental risks and are constant threats to health.

### The Comfort Station

A Comfort Station is a building designed to provide toilet, bathing and laundry facilities for an extended family compound of 300 - 600 persons. As a method of disposing of the waste waters and human excreta, the Comfort Station is under the direct management of the Ibadan Wastes Disposal and Drainage Board.

The Comfort Station is not a public facility but the bona fide property of the families who participated in its construction. Only members of the family compound can use the station and they are responsible for the cost of operation and maintenance. Proper operation of the Comfort Station is essential and daily maintenance of the Station is the responsibility of the owner who must ensure that toilets, showers, and laundry rooms are kept clean and that repairs of minor faults are made before they become major problems.

In 1970, a WHO/UNDP assisted Comfort Station experiment was thus started by the Western State Government of Nigeria to "provide a sanitary means of disposing waste waters and human excreta".

The Study: THE STUDY OF THE HEALTH EDUCATION COMPONENT OF THE COMFORT STATION PROGRAMME

This is a two-year study of nine Comfort Stations at the inner core of Ibadan City (Nigeria) which was undertaken with a WHO research grant in 1974.

Broad Objectives:

- The broad objectives of the study were two-fold -
- (1) to identify the factors that contribute to well utilized and maintained Comfort Stations; and
  - (2) to identify specifically what health education has contribute,

is contributing, and can still contribute to the success of the Comfort Station experiment.

Specific Objectives:

- (1) To review the major health problems in the communities in terms of Pre-Comfort Station and During-Comfort Station periods in order to identify the present status of health problems in the communities.
- (2) To study the people's attitudes toward and knowledge of the Comfort Station as an environmental sanitation measure and facility.
- (3) To identify the factors that contribute to the effective utilization and maintenance of the Comfort Stations and to interpret their health education implications.
- (4) To identify the factors which affect the total operation of the Comfort Stations experiment.
- (5) To isolate the impact of health education activities on the people's attitudes and responses toward the Comfort Stations in terms of effective use and maintenance.
- (6) To suggest ways of maximizing the effective utilization and maintenance of the Comfort Stations.

### Hypothetical Assumptions

The following hypothetical assumptions are inferred from educational activities integrated into the Comfort Stations programme introduction, development and implementation processes:

- (1) that the local communities would readily accept, adopt and support the Comfort Station idea
- (2) that ego-involvement and active participation of the target population in the programme planning would influence voluntary and effective use and maintenance of the Comfort Stations.
- (3) that effective use and maintenance of the Comfort Stations would keep the open drains dry and improve the methods of disposal of waste water and human excreta in the communities with the Stations; and
- (4) that success demonstrated in the effective use and maintenance of the completed Comfort Stations covered in this study would encourage other communities to build their own Comfort Stations.

## METHODOLOGY AND MATERIALS

### Selection of Education Principles

The following educational principles were selected and developed as a strategy for identifying and monitoring the educational inputs into the Comfort Stations Project. The Report of the Health Education Project Advisory Committee on "Making Health Education Work"<sup>1</sup> supported and contributed to the refinement of the educational principles which were originally developed by the project staff in 1973 when the study started.

- (1) Personal and situational factors create and influence the behaviour pattern that already exists.
  - (2) The learner must be ego-involved and actively participate in his own goal and actions and must evolve a way of achieving them within his framework of values, beliefs and resources.
  - (3) Learning is facilitated by helping the learner to discover the meaning and identify the relevance of what he is being taught to his needs, interests and problems as well as to his beliefs, values and practices.
  - (4) What has an intrinsic value for the people generates self-motivation, and external motivation is of minimal education value until it has stimulated the intrinsic self-motivational force within the target population.
- 

1. Health Education Project Advisory Committee, "Making Health Education Work", American Journal of Public Health Supplement, Vol. 65 (October, 1975).



- (5) Changes in behaviour to be long lasting and practised regularly, must be self-imposed: they must not be administratively ordered. The behaviour must be integrated into the individual's life patterning.
- (6) Many experiences, both positive and negative, have an impact on what an individual, a group, or a community thinks, feels and does about health.
- (7) A clear definition and enunciation of educational objectives facilitates learning in that it helps to prepare the learner's mind for the anticipated behavioural responses.
- (8) It is what the learner does that he learns, and not what the teacher does: the learner learns to do by actually doing. Therefore, until action or positive response has been facilitated in the learner, education has not taken place.
- (9) All education efforts are based on the promotion of a sense of individual identity, dignity, and responsibility, as well as community solidarity.
- (10) The promotion of health action must be in keeping with the services and resources available, so that false expectations and frustrations will not develop.

- (11) Those who are to benefit from a health education service (the target population) should be involved very early in the definition of need and in the determination of what actions should be undertaken.
- (12) Effective communication is a powerful educational force in bringing about the anticipated behaviour from the learner (the communicatee) since communication is a conscious intent to affect behaviour in a given direction.

#### Data Collection Process

Data were collected in two ways: community survey and interviews.

##### (1) Community Survey

The purpose was to identify the local people's ways of life in general and their perception of, and attitudes towards the Comfort Station experiment/environmental sanitation in particular. The need for the external change agents to know the people they wish to help and work with in their local setting has long been established in social research.<sup>1</sup>

*observation?*

---

1. Benjamin Paul, (ed.), Health Culture and Community (New York: Russell Sage Foundations, 1955).

This knowledge of local situational realities includes information on:

- (a) Local power structure and leadership patterns
- (b) Local events and situations
- (c) Local ways of life.
- (d) Local needs, interests and problems for their relevance, direct or indirect, to the Comfort Station project.

(2) Interviews

Formal and informal, oral and written (Questionnaires).

The educational implications of the two data collection techniques used were constantly examined.

Instruments Used in Community Study

The main instruments used include:

- (1) Archival and library studies on the community
- (2) Oral reports and impressions from community and individuals
- (3) Public health accounts
- (4) Special study reports - published and unpublished
- (5) Questionnaires and formal/informal interviews
- (6) Formal and informal meetings with the people in their natural habitats in the city and countryside dwelling places
- (7) Official contacts
- (8) Community organization processes.

## II. MAJOR FINDINGS

### 1. Background Information on the Target Communities in the Inner Core of Ibadan City

The following information were based on observation, interview and discussion with the target population:

#### Environmental Sanitation Facilities:

Basic environmental sanitation facilities and related social amenities were either non-existing or grossly inadequate in the whole of the inner core of the city. In all the nine family compounds with about 5,000 people, there were 1 public toilet, 1 refuse depot, 2 public water taps, and 3 private wells.

In the whole of the old Ibadan with about 1½ million people, there were 15 public toilets and 344 public water taps at the time this study was carried out.

#### People's General Environmental Sanitation Behaviour:

##### (a) Attitudes towards and knowledge about disposal of excreta

The general people's attitude to excreta is that it is a normal process of keeping the bowel free and light. Certain diseases such as dysentery, diarrhoea and cholera were associated with particular type of excrements, in that patients who pass out particular faeces are known to be suffering from some kinds of diseases (not that the

excreta is a health hazard). Failure of regular opening up of the bowel could cause stomach-ache due to constipation.

To the majority of the people, where one defaecates is a matter of choice and convenience rather than concern for the sanitary of health implications. The masses did not associate health problems with insanitary disposal of excreta. The only things associated with excreta disposal are offensive odour, ugly sight and invitation to flies. The methods of excreta disposal include going to the bush, "wrapping" methods, dunghill, water by those living by the riverside, chamber pots, latrines (or salanga) and bucket system.

To the average sane adult, privacy at toilet is a capital concern. After defaecation, people generally clean up with any handy objects such as leaves, sticks, papers, corn cobs and water. Water is mostly used by the moslems in response to their religious demand.

(b) Attitudes towards water

The masses do not associate any disease with water, whether used for drinking, cooking or bathing, for washing or for swimming in. Dirty water is not even regarded as a health hazard.

Stagnant water, due to poor drainage and indiscriminate as well as insanitary disposal of waste waters, is never associated with any health hazard. It is however loathed for emitting foul odours, dirty

and ugly sight, and for messing the feet if waded through, and for messing the floor of the house with smeared feet.

(c) Attitudes towards personal appearance

The people show great appreciation for personal cleanliness for aesthetic rather than strictly health reasons. Aesthetically, the people are used to wearing clean and colourful dresses notwithstanding the relative nature of the concept "clean". Characteristical regular bathing at least twice a day (morning and evening) and regular washing of clothes to make sure that they are clean require easily available and accessible water supplies.

The people living by the brook or the river usually take their bath there, while a few of such people take their bath at home, usually at the backyard with or without a bathroom for privacy. Concern for privacy takes various forms ranging from covering the private part with towels, wearing pants, and hiding the private part in one form or another by the adults when taking their bath in the open either at the backyard without a bathroom or at the river or brook.

A dirty person is associated with offensive odours, and the belief is that lice feed on dirty people. However, foul odour and lice are not associated with any health hazard by the masses, except the educated ones.

(d) Attitudes towards public latrines (toilets)

The people generally disliked the public latrines known to them because they were dirty, slippery, smelling, unsafe and inconvenient. Consequently, most of the people would rather use the bush or the dunghill than the public latrines most of the public latrines in the city were only used as a last resort.

General

Both the village/farm settlement and the city dwelling places of the target population were visited because most of the people, as peasant farmers and petty traders, had dual habitats. Most of the visits were made unheralded so as not to influence the environmental sanitation habits of the people.

The villages were met in relatively clean conditions even though most of the farmers and traders had left for their places of work before we got there. There was evidence of good sweeping of both the surrounding and the inside of the houses (particularly as shown in the houses where we had access through the cooperation of the inhabitants). In all refuse was deposited at the dunghills usually about 50 - 75 yards from the houses. There were no latrines in any of the villages visited because the people defaecated in the bush. The project staff were told that the children defaecated

at the dunghills while the infants used chamber pots which were regularly emptied into the dunghills. There was no evidence of indiscriminate squatting.

The environmental sanitation condition at the village was a sharp contrast in several ways to what was discovered at the inner core of Ibadan city where the same people encountered in the villages lived by virtue of their dual habitat characteristics. In contrast to the villages, the surroundings of the houses were filthy with garbage although the inside of most houses was relatively clean as far as sweeping was concerned. Squatting was a common feature in the communities although the people claimed that their main modes of excreta disposal were pit latrines, bucket latrines, bush and chamber pots.

#### Leadership Pattern

The main criteria for recognized leadership among the people were: traditional chieftaincy, religious responsibility, special contribution to community life and development, identification with local aspirations and community residency. The educated ones without any of these qualities were not recognized as "local leaders". Refer to Table I for Leadership characterization.



LEADERSHIP CHARACTERIZATION

<u>COMMUNITY LEADER</u>	<u>AGE</u>	<u>EDUCATION</u>	<u>INCOME</u>	<u>OCCUPATION</u>	<u>SOCIAL STATUS/ LEADERSHIP TYPLOGY</u>
ADEBOLU	60 yrs	Formal Education/ Arabic Scholar	₦1,200	Imman	Religious leader
APENA	75 yrs	No formal Education	₦600	Court Assessor	Community Elected leader
BARA	65 yrs	Formal Education (Primary Education)	₦600	Retired Civil Servant: Foreman Car-penters, Public Works Dept.	Religious Leader/ Community elected leader
EGBODI	75 yrs	No formal Education	Dependance on the Children	Self-employed	Traditional Chief Community Elected Leader
FOKO	64 yrs	No formal Education	₦200	Peasant	Traditional Chief
SAKU	60 yrs	No formal Education	₦200	Peasant	Head of family
OYEWO/ LAWOYE	63 yrs	Formal Education (Primary Education)	₦600	Farmer	Social Elite
KAGUNMOLU	56 yrs	No formal Education	₦200	Peasant	Head of family
ADEPO	52 yrs	Formal Islamic Education	₦300	Petty Trader	Religious Leader
	60 yrs	Formal Islamic Education Arabic Scholar	₦200	Alfa	Community Elected Leader 'Mogaji'

NB: The incomes recorded were mere guesses because most of the people were not ready to tell even if they knew what theirs was exactly, let alone the fact that most are self-employed.

### III. DATA FROM THE ADMINISTERED QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE COMFORT STATIONS

#### Sociological Characteristics of Respondents

Of the total of 700 respondents (300 male and 400 female), majority of 76% were illiterates and semi-literates, with the illiterates constituting 64%. Most of the respondents belonged to low income group with less than ₦500 per year. Most (about 75%) of them were self-employed primarily as petty traders (and peasant farmers while very few belonged to the white collar jobs. Eight-one per cent of them belonged to the most active and productive age-bracket (21-50 years of age).

#### Methods of Excreta Disposal Prior to the Comfort Stations

Most of the respondents (44%) from the family compounds with the nine Comfort Stations claimed that they used pit latrines, 80% of them? used water closet followed by 5% who used bucket latrines. Others used the bush, dunghills, etcetera.

#### People's Attitude Toward the Comfort Stations

To the Question: Did you like the idea of having a Comfort Station before it actually came into use in your compound? - 70.4% of the respondents said "Yes", 10% said "No", while 19.5% were "Can't say".

To the Question: Did you foresee any problems or difficulty with the Comfort Stations before they came into use? - 6% of the respondents said "Yes", 76% said "No" and 18% were "Not Certain".

#### Involvement and Participation

317 (45%) of the respondents said that they participated in one form or another in the Comfort Stations programme development phase while 383 (55%) said that they did not take part. Among the reasons advanced for non-participation were that:

- (1) they were never told (24%)
- (2) they were never invited (15%) and
- (3) they were told but not invited (16%).

#### Persistent Use of Chamber Pots

482 (62%) of the respondents claimed that they used chamber pots as a temporary measure pending when the content would be disposed of into the latrines or dunghills. The reasons advanced for the persistent use of chamber pots were as follows:

- (i) for the children/infants and the sick (92% of users)
- (ii) people were used to it (5% of users)
- (iii) preference of chamber pots to latrines (2% of users)
- (iv) distance from the public toilets/Comfort Stations.

Those respondents who did not like to use the latrines gave as their reasons:

- (i) fear of falling into the latrine pits or that the latrines were unsafe;
- (ii) lack of privacy at the latrines;
- (iii) insanitary conditions of the latrines and the loathed black flies and bad smells;
- (iv) distance of the latrines from the homes.

#### IV. PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED WITH THE COMFORT STATION PROGRAMME

Three groups of problems were identified with the Comfort Stations programme development and utilization phases. They were the pre-construction, during-construction and post-construction problems.

##### (1) Pre-construction Problems

###### (i) Initial Resistance Problem:

There was an initial resistance to the Comfort Stations idea when it was introduced. The resistance was due to an existing tax agitation among the people at the time the idea of the Comfort Stations was introduced among the people. The local people were aggrieved over a flat rate of N6.00 per head. The people's agitation for a

reduction in the tax rate was also aggravated by their concern for alleged lack of basic social amenities in their communities and villages. The police and the tax collectors who were perceived as agents of the government and politicians became objects of hate and targets of attack and abuse from the local people. This was the origin of the 1969 tax riot in Ibadan and at the eve of the Comfort Stations experiment.

Thus, local events at the time of the introduction of the Comfort Station idea was a major contributory factor to the initial resistance problem because, as events later proved, the initial resistance was to the Government of the day and its agencies rather than to the initiator of the Comfort Station idea.

(ii) Local Prejudice Against Public Health Inspectors

Many of the local leaders were at the time of launching the Comfort Station idea at logger heads with the public health inspectors. This was because of the prejudice which the local people had against the health inspectors over alleged tyranny, exorbitant fines, victimization, extortion and other ills since about 1963. The health inspectors were regarded as agents of the politicians and the government. It was alleged that most of the charges which the inspectors levelled against them over poor environmental sanitation

were regarded as calculated attempts to punish the people by "the agents of the party which we did not support". Thus, any mention of the idea of "environmental sanitation" was calculated to be the making of the public health inspectors acting in the guise of new agents. Hence the idea was taken with extreme suspicion and caution.

Like the problems of initial resistance, the crisis with the public health inspectors would be seen as the people's direct confrontation with the Government of the day and its political agents as well as with the inspectors for their alleged personal corruption.

(iii) People's Concern over Family Land Donated

The people expressed grave concern over the family piece of land which they had to donate for the construction of the Comfort Stations. There was the fear that the government might turn round in later years to appropriate the land and take over the Comfort Stations. Also, the families greatly treasured their land as a main source of security to their posterity and, as such, they hesitated to give it away gratis. There were some people whose concern was not with the need to get adequate compensation or with government appropriation of their family land, but with the fact that they had to give up that treasured land for the construction of "mere" latrines. "How, on earth, can we be expected to donate our land for the construction of public latrines of all the valuable uses our

land can be put today?"

The attitude of the people is not totally strange because at that point in time in the history of Nigeria there were many cases involving governments' appropriation of family lands and estates in other parts of the country. Many land cases were even pending at court when this study was being conducted.

(2) During-Construction Problems

(i) Shortage of Free Labour:

By virtue of their jobs mainly as farmers and traders, the local people were not ready for voluntary labour for the self-help aspect of the construction of the Comfort Stations. Rather, they preferred to hire paid labourers to do their own aspect of work but many of them did not pay their own levies for paying the labourers.

(ii) Acute Shortage of Building Materials :

The people complained of acute shortage of building materials at different stages of the Comfort Stations construction. The problem was aggravated by both the general universal inflationary trends and, particularly, the heavy ports congestion in Nigeria at the time.

The problem was not provoked by lack of acceptance of the idea of the Comfort Stations by the people. Rather it was a problem which arose from local situational events which affected the programme

construction phase. Acute shortage of building materials at the time this study was undertaken had led to the suspension of so many government and individual personal building projects in all parts of Nigeria.

(3) Post-construction Problems

Problems in this phase were those connected with the use and maintenance of the Comfort Stations.

(i) High Electricity and Water Bills

There were two main problems - high electricity and water bills. Many families complained of "heavy water bills" which they could not afford to pay. The inability of a family compound to pay always led the Water Corporation to disconnect the water supplies serving the Comfort Stations. Without regular water supply the Comfort Stations experiment would be virtually rendered useless. Similarly, because of the people's failure to pay the electricity bills, the Nigerian Electric Power Authority (NEPA) often had to disconnect the light serving the Comfort Stations thereby rendering maximum use and care of the Stations' difficult, if not impossible, at night.

(ii) Intermittent Disruption of Light:

The Comfort Stations shared with other parts of Ibadan the common experience of regular light failure which rendered the



Comfort Stations unusable to most people at night, the light meter was often switched off at night by the local people to prevent wastage of meter. Also to make sure that the light was not used when the meter was not switched off, the doors of some Comfort Stations were locked at about 7.00 p.m. to be re-opened at about 6.00 p.m.

Another rationale for locking the Comfort Stations at night by the owners was, according to the people, to prevent "outsiders" from making use of the Stations.

Apart from NEPA failure, the main reason for the control of power-light supply was the need to keep the light bill down.

(ii) Derelict Individuals and Groups:

Some family compounds opted for direct labour to ensure the maintenance of the Comfort Stations instead of employing paid caretakers. One method was for each household to be responsible for the general sanitary condition of the Comfort Station for a specific period of time through rotation system. Another method was that each household was allocated a number of aqua privy and bath rooms, and the household concerned was made responsible for the sanitary maintenance.

The problem with this kind of arrangement was that in certain instances the work was either never done or perfunctorily performed by derelict individuals or groups.

(iv) Cost of Repair of Damages:

Damages to some of the facilities such as broken doors, tap tabs, and laundry slabs were never repaired by the people. A general complaint was either lack of money, or <sup>responsibility?</sup> unavailable repair materials, or both. Lack of repairs to any damaged structures often led to disuse or improper use of the Comfort Stations.

V. EVIDENCE OF EDUCATIONAL INPUTS

The need to integrate health education into the Comfort Station project was clearly stated as a pre-requisite for achieving the project goal. To this end, a WHO health educator was attached to the project in 1971.

A review of the educational processes used by the project staff groups during the introduction and development phases of the Comfort Station programme revealed the following:

1. Community survey/study as an educational diagnostic method and of knowing and learning about the target population in their total setting.
2. Community organization as an educational process involving the identification and utilization of local resources in support of the new programme. During the process, for example, the local leaders and power

structure, the Cke-Seni Development Society and the NW3 Health Council were identified and used appropriately.

3. Local involvement and participation as educational processes - demonstrated in a number of ways.
4. Documentation of local people's beliefs, values and practices relevant to environmental sanitation.
5. Documentation of local communications system and methods for educational purposes, e.g. Yoruba Symbolism.
6. Identification of local situational and people's needs, and problems with their actual and potential implications for the Comfort Station project.

## DISCUSSION

### The People's General Environmental Sanitation Behaviours

From the project staff's experience of the local people environmental sanitation-related knowledge, attitudes and practices in the towns and villages/farm settlements, the general impression usually held by many government officials that the people of Ibadan are "naturally dirty" is untenable and totally without rational justification. On the contrary, the average Ibadan person is very aware of the need for, and tries to maintain clean environment (granted that the term

"clean" is relative) in their natural habitats as experienced particularly at the villages.

The impression which gained ground about the people's apparent dirty habits, therefore, must have stemmed from a cursory and narrow observation of the people's living conditions in the inner core of Ibadan City where most of the dwellers are just victims of urban phenomena. Total lack of, or inadequate, basic sanitary facilities, such as non-available and non-easily accessible toilet facilities and refuse bins, encouraged indiscriminate insanitary disposal of household refuse, excreta and other human wastes. For example, in the whole of the old Ibadan with about 1½ million people, there were only 15 public toilets and 344 public water taps at the time this study was carried out.

The slum, squalor and diseases associated with the poor environmental sanitation conditions are, by and large, the results of the way and manner in which the total social environment has been planned, developed and managed by the government rather than the results of poor sanitary habits of the people in the inner core of the City.

Advantages of the Comfort Stations Over Other  
Local Environmental Sanitation Facilities

The advantages of the Comfort Stations over other local environmental sanitation facilities may be summed up. The Comfort Stations are:

- i. safer in terms of the solid nature of the walls and floor structure;
- ii. more private for individuals bathing or using the toilet;
- iii. source of more regular and convenient water supply for bathing and washing clothes;
- iv. more convenient with regard to the number of people per toilet; and
- v. more hygienic and aesthetically satisfying.

These advantages were opportuned educational tools for making the Comfort Stations idea accepted when it was first introduced, in the sense that the Comfort Stations fulfilled some of the basic needs and intrinsic values of the target population.

Persistent Use of Chamber Pots

In spite of the Comfort Stations, the majority of the people still continue to use the chamber pots particularly for temporary collection of the toilets of children and sick members of the family pending the eventual disposal. This practice will continue:

1. as long as the problem of inconvenience and fear created by distance from the users persists - particularly in the large compounds, where people have to walk for about 5 minutes to get to the toilet at night, and where light is not always guaranteed for easy movement; and
2. as long as majority of the people have not realized the health implications of leaving excreta in dwelling places even for a "short" time.

Therefore, it requires both health education and better social planning, such as conveniently located Comfort Stations, to discourage this practice.

#### Degree of Local People's Involvement and Participation

With 55% of the respondents admitting that they did not participate in any form in the Comfort Stations programme development, it is probable that up to 75% of the people were not actively involved.

From records and discussion with the people, the local leaders/influentials were more actively involved than the masses at different stages of the programme development. From a practical perspective this approach is a realistic one because the acceptance (or rejection) of the Comfort Station idea by the local influentials/leaders would also affect the behavioural response of the masses toward it.

*but most of them didn't even know (see p 17)*

### Comfort Stations Utilization and Maintenance Problems

By their nature, the problems identified fell under two categories: those which directly stemmed from the target population as individuals and as a group, and those which stemmed from situational events. To the first category belonged the inability or rather the unpreparedness of most of the people to pay the light and water bills and cost of repairs. From experience about how the people spend money on other social activities, it would be incorrect to conclude that poverty was responsible for their failure to pay, for example, the light and water bills. The failure is conclusively attributed to:

1. the people's perception of government responsibilities for the Comfort Stations with particular reference to free or almost free light and water supplies to the Stations; and
2. the fact that the people have not actually internalized the value of the Comfort Stations.

To the second category of the problems belonged the Irregular water supplies and constant power failures as a result of the inefficiencies or failures of the Western Nigerian Water Corporation and Nigerian Electricity Power Authority respectively; the people's attitudes toward the government and its agents (e.g. public health inspectors and tax collectors); and other events in the total project

setting.

**VI. SELECTED AND SPECIALLY USED EDUCATIONAL PRINCIPLES AND METHODS AS SPECIAL EDUCATION INPUTS TO FACILITATE THE UTILIZATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE COMFORT STATIONS**

In the light of the baseline information, findings from the administered questionnaire, information from interviews and observations, community study and organization processes, and the nature of the problems identified with the programme, the following educational methods were specially used to facilitate the effective utilization and maintenance of the Comfort Station:

1. Committee System - as a means of practical involvement and active participation. Two types of Committee meetings were extensively used:
  - (a) the General Committee Meeting (GCM) - representatives of the nine Comfort Stations, Ibadan Waste Disposal and Development Board (IWDDDB), Ibadan City Council (ICC), Chairman of NW3 Health Council, and Project Staff.
  - (b) the Local Committee Meeting (LCM) - all the people in each family compound.
2. Local Conflict Resolution - as a means of community integration, developing trust and confidence in the project staff, and psychological preparation of the affected people for the project.



3. Integration of the Comfort Station Idea Into what Is of Intrinsic Value for the People - in response to the socio-cultural dynamics of education strategies selected include:
- (a) people's concern for "privacy
  - (b) people's tradition for "clean" personal habits and surroundings
  - (c) people's concern for regular water supply for bathing and washing of clothes
  - (d) people's aversion to "dirt" in all its ramifications
  - (e) people's aversion to offensive odour in their total environment
  - (f) people's traditional and socio-cultural aesthetic values and living
  - (g) people's traditional self-help attitude
  - (h) people's traditional cooperative and communal spirit.
4. Local Communications Systems and Methods - these were appropriately utilized to facilitate understanding in the process of communicating the Comfort Stations idea. The main strategy used was the "two-step-flow of communication" in response to the need of the majority of the target population (76%) who were largely illiterates and semi-literates.

5. Taking and Distributing of Local Pictures as a Strategy for Facilitating Local People's Involvement and Active Participation - pictures of the local people, particularly the local influentials, the Comfort Stations and other environmental sanitation features of the community were used in a number of ways and they produced a variety of positive effects on the people's behaviours and on the Comfort Stations programme.

Sallent among the effects:

- (a) they made the committee meetings fuller
- (b) same were used to decorate the homes
- (c) they were used for discussion related to the Comfort Station environmental sanitation
- (d) they helped to create a sense of personal worth, dignity and identity for those who appeared in them
- (e) news of the pictures attracted the lukewarm committee members to attend meetings
- (f) they helped to promote group identity and group feeling
- (g) they served as an entertaining device.

6. Miscellaneous Educational Strategies - the other educational methods used were:

- (a) informal group discussions
- (b) face-to-face individual counselling

Conclusion?  
responsibilities?  
activities?

- (c) practical demonstration of anticipated behaviours
- (d) periodic follow-up and supportive social visits
- (e) use of local resources such as the Cke-Seni Community Development Society on matters affecting the use and care of the Comfort Station.

VII. EVALUATION OF PROGRESS REPORTS ON THE UTILIZATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE COMFORT STATIONS

The factors which have far reaching effects on the progress report on the use and maintenance of the Comfort Station are:

- (1) seasonal events
- (2) leadership typology
- (3) local people's interest and the influence of existing Comfort Stations
- (4) uniqueness of each community
- (5) education inputs
- (6) early termination of educational inputs.

On the whole, the progress report was above average with 70% as the mean; there were better records of utilization than of maintenance. In spite of the problems identified with the use and maintenance, the people made a maximum use of the Stations. The relatively low scores appeared in the area of maintenance, with particular regard

to irregular water supply and lack of repairs to damages to the water taps, broken doors and falling walls.

It is pertinent to observe that when the health education project was terminated provision should have been turned over to and effectively integrated the health education function into, the existing health service programme in the community. Had this been done successfully it is likely the drop in performance rates for use and maintenance would not have occurred. The Bara Family Comfort Station is a case in point. The retired Public Works Department Officer, who is now a community leader, has apparently been influential; in his private capacity he has continued the educational function. To this end the results at the Comfort Station were satisfactory.

Two possibilities, therefore, need further study:

1. What would happen if the educational programme were turned over to and integrated into the programme of the established health service and if the effort were maintained for from five to ten years?
2. What is the influence of a health worker living among and a member of an extended family group, as is the case of the retired Public Works Department Officer in the Bara family?

Both possibilities need to be looked into for influencing family and community health behaviour and the implications these would have for strategies to be developed in community health education programme.

TABLE 21: MAINTENANCE AND UTILIZATION DATA: JANUARY-SEPTEMBER, 1974

FAMILY COMPOUNDS		SCORES AND PERCENTAGE OF PERFORMANCE									
		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	JAN-SEP MEAN
1	ADEBOLU	58%	63%	33%	56%	70%	88%	81%	66%	77%	64%
2	APENA	71%	39%	61%	81%	81%	88%	78%	78%	92%	74%
3	BARA	90%	100%	58%	98%	100%	100%	97%	94%	100%	93%
4	EGBODI	79%	77%	72%	72%	95%	95%	88%	91%	97%	87%
5	FOKO	48%	50%	34%	57%	81%	88%	82%	81%	92%	68%
6	SAKU	87%	77%	64%	97%	84%	97%	88%	91%	97%	87%
7	ADEPO	•	•	•	•	•	90%	92%	78%	92%	88%
8	KAGUNMOLU	•	•	•	•	•	86%	86%	81%	92%	86%
9	OYEWO/LAWOYE	•	•	•	•	•	88%	88%	84%	92%	88%

N.B. • Adepo, Kagunmolu and Oyewo/Lawoye were later additions to the study.

TABLE 22: MAINTENANCE AND UTILIZATION MEAN  
DISTRIBUTION OF GRAND PROGRESS OF  
THE COMFORT STATIONS

JANUARY - SEPTEMBER, 1974

JANUARY	72%
FEBRUARY	68%
MARCH	54%
APRIL	77%
MAY	85%
JUNE	91%
JULY	87%
AUGUST	83%
SEPTEMBER	92%

FIGURE 16 :- MAINTENANCE AND UTILIZATION DATA:  
 January through September, 1974

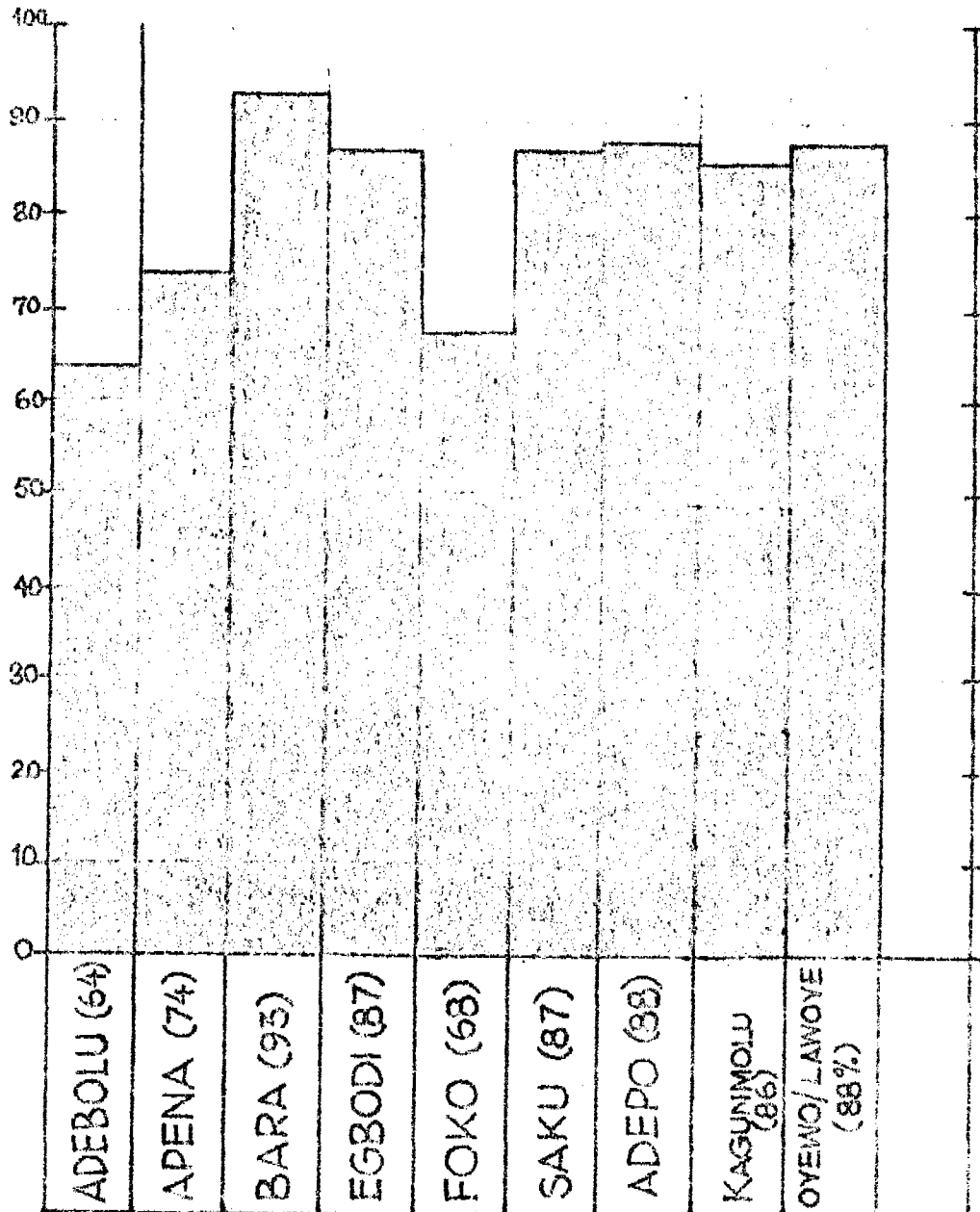
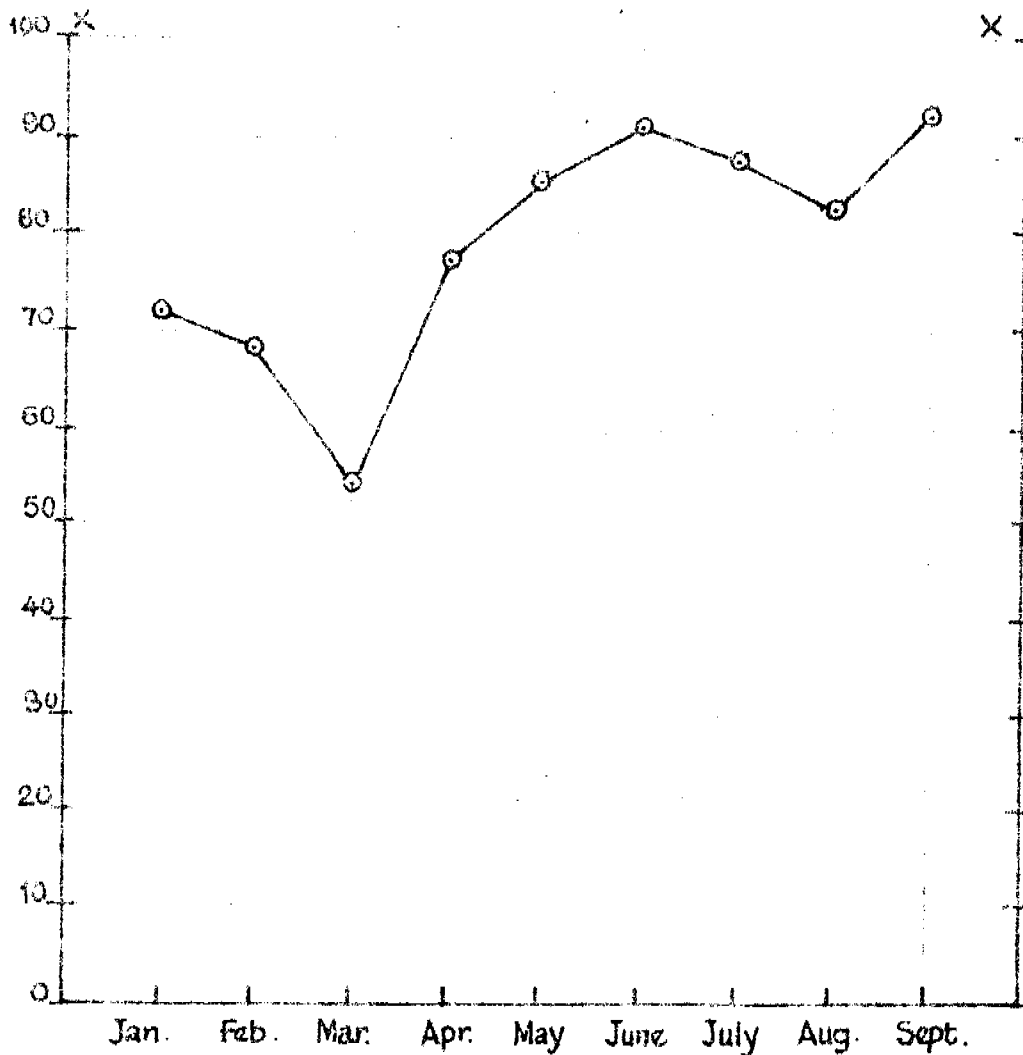


FIGURE 17: MAINTENANCE AND UTILIZATION MEAN  
DISTRIBUTION OF GRAND PROGRESS OF  
THE COMFORT STATIONS  
(January thru September 1974)



X = OPTIMUM PROGRESS



TABLE 23: TERMINAL EVALUATION REPORT ON  
 THE UTILIZATION AND MAINTENANCE  
 OF THE COMFORT STATIONS:  
 MAY - JUNE, 1975

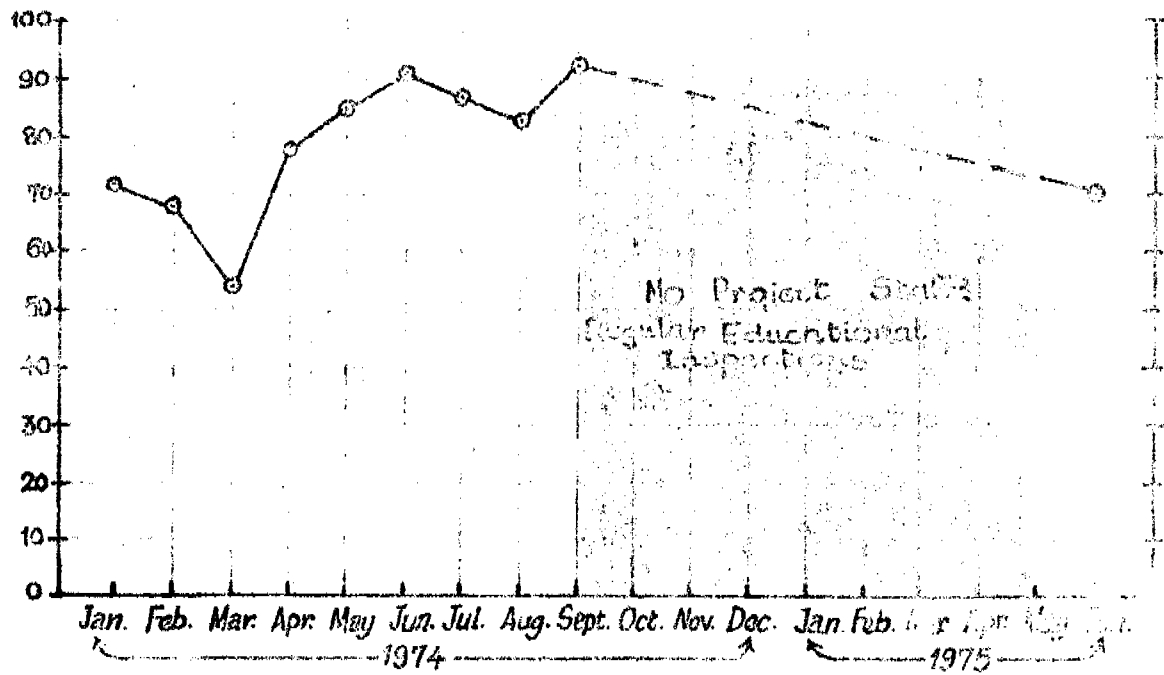
FAMILY COMPCUNDS	TOTAL SCORES	PERCENTAGE
ADEBOLU	180/350	51
APENA	285/350	81
BARA	350/350	100
EGBODI	240/350	69
FOKO	145/350	41
SAKU	350/350	100
ADEPO	185/350	53
KAGUNMCLU	245/350	70
CYEWQ/LAWOYE	220/350	63

TABLE 24 : OVERALL PROGRESS REPORT OF UTILIZATION  
AND MAINTENANCE OF THE COMFORT STATIONS,  
TERMINAL EVALUATION INCLUSIVE :  
JANUARY 1974 - MAY/JUNE 1975

1974 :-	January	72%
	February	68%
	March	54%
	April	77%
	May	85%
	June	91%
	July	87%
	August	83%
	September	92%
1975 :-	May/June	70%

FIGURE 18: OVERALL PROGRESS REPORT OF UTILIZATION AND MAINTENANCE OF COMFORT STATIONS, TERMINAL EVALUATION INCLUSIVE.

JANUARY 1974 - MAY/JUNE 1975



### VIII. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The following concluding remarks are made in the context of the implications of the findings for the health education aspect of environmental sanitation or Comfort Station programmes in general.

1. Definitive specification of health education parameters in terms of specific educational principles is a prerequisite for the isolation of the educational inputs into environmental sanitation/Comfort Station programmes.
2. Documentation of local beliefs, values and practices is an educational process.
3. Acceptance and convenience of environmental sanitation/Comfort Station services facilitate their effective use by the target population.
4. Personal and situational factors affect the outcome of environmental sanitation/Comfort Station programmes.
5. Participation and involvement are vital educational processes.
6. The processes of identification, utilization and effective coordination of local resources and efforts are potential education tools and methods.
7. The effective use of local leadership produces dynamic and stabilizing effects on environmental sanitation/Comfort Station projects.

8. Active involvement and effective coordination of local technical resources are vital to the sustained progress of the Comfort Stations.
9. The use of local communications systems and methods helps the target population to discover the meaning and relevance of new environmental sanitation projects like the Comfort Station.
10. The supportive educational inspection role of the public health inspectors is crucial for the success of environmental sanitation/Comfort Station programmes in Ibadan.
11. An ecologic and holistic approach to environmental sanitation programmes is a critical prerequisite to the successful realization of their education component.

#### The Future of the Comfort Stations

By the nature of the problems encountered in the operational process of the Comfort Stations - e.g. the problem of what the people described as "heavy" water and light bills - heavy in the context of their economic limitations - there is no gainsaying the fact that effective utilization and maintenance of the Comfort Stations will largely depend on radical change in the social system and public attitudes toward environmental sanitation in Ibadan. Already, encouraging change in

the life-style of the target population has been dramatized by the way the people accepted and adopted the Comfort Station idea as a special environmental sanitation device.

While not minimizing the responsibilities of the health consumers in this regard, equally important, if not more important, is the supportive role of the government. The government should provide basic health and other social welfare infrastructure. Without these basic facilities, it would be unrealistic condemning the consumers for failure to grow or change in their general attitudes and perceptions toward environmental sanitation programmes. The promotion of health action must be in keeping with services and resources available, so that false expectations and frustration do not develop. To this end, for example, without regular water and light supplies the people will not make a maximum use of the Comfort Stations: they can only use what is available. The government needs, therefore, to reappraise its policy and attitudes toward health matters in general and the Comfort Stations in particular as far as these affect the general behaviour and perceptions of the people toward general health interventions.

The NW3 Ward Health Council has succeeded in rallying round the people's support for the Comfort Station experiment. It is hoped that a demonstration of this success in the area of environmental

sanitation may also motivate other Wards to establish their own Health Councils so that at no distant future a city-wide public forum may be available to assist in the planning, construction and operation of essential sanitary facilities for the entire City of Ibadan. In this way, the Ward Health Councils promise a potential and most realistic educational strategy for the active involvement and participation of the local people in identifying their environmental health problems and, consequently, in planning to overcome them, given all necessary supportive technical assistance and motivation.

Finally, the view often held that it is difficult to isolate the educational inputs in a given public health programme has been invalidated in this study. The place of educational processes in the realization of the objectives of the Comfort Stations project has been demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt. There is no other way of making a success of environmental sanitation programmes, like the Comfort Stations, particularly in a predominantly illiterate and semi-literate community, without effective integration of education processes into the introduction, development and implementation phases of such programmes. The corner-stone of these processes is the active involvement and participation of the target population in the plan of operation of the three phases of the Comfort Station programme.

REFERENCES

1. Ademuwagun, Z.A.: "Some Educational Planning Principles in Public Health Programme", Journal of Society of Health, Nigeria, Vol. V, No. 1 (1970).
2. Ademuwagun, Z.A.: "Major Impediments to Effective Use of Health Services", The Journal of Health Education, Vol. 31, No. 2 (1972).
3. Ademuwagun, Z.A.: "Information and Motivation in Health Education", The Journal of Health Education, Vol. 31, No. 3 (1972).
4. Ademuwagun, Z.A.: "The Challenge of Health Education Methods and Techniques in Developing Countries", Health Education Journal, Vol. 33, No. 1 (1974).
5. Bennis, W.G., Benne, K.D., and Chin, R.: The Planning of Change (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961).
6. Health Education in Environmental Health Programmes, WHO Regional Office for Africa, Brazzaville, AFR/HE/69 (April 23, 1975).
7. Knutson, A.L.: The Individual, Society, and Health Behaviour (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1965).
8. Paul, B.D.: Health Culture and Community (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1955).
9. The Health Education Project Advisory Committee: "Making Health Education Work", American Journal of Public Health, Vol. 65 (October 1975 Supplement).
10. Williams, Erol: "Community Organization as a Health Education Process", Paper Presented at the Seminar on Environmental Sanitation, UCH, Ibadan, August 15 - 18, 1972.