



Building Successful Sludge Enterprises in Norton, Zimbabwe

Innovation and Impact Grant Session

Mark Harper | 3 August 2017

Welthungerhilfe

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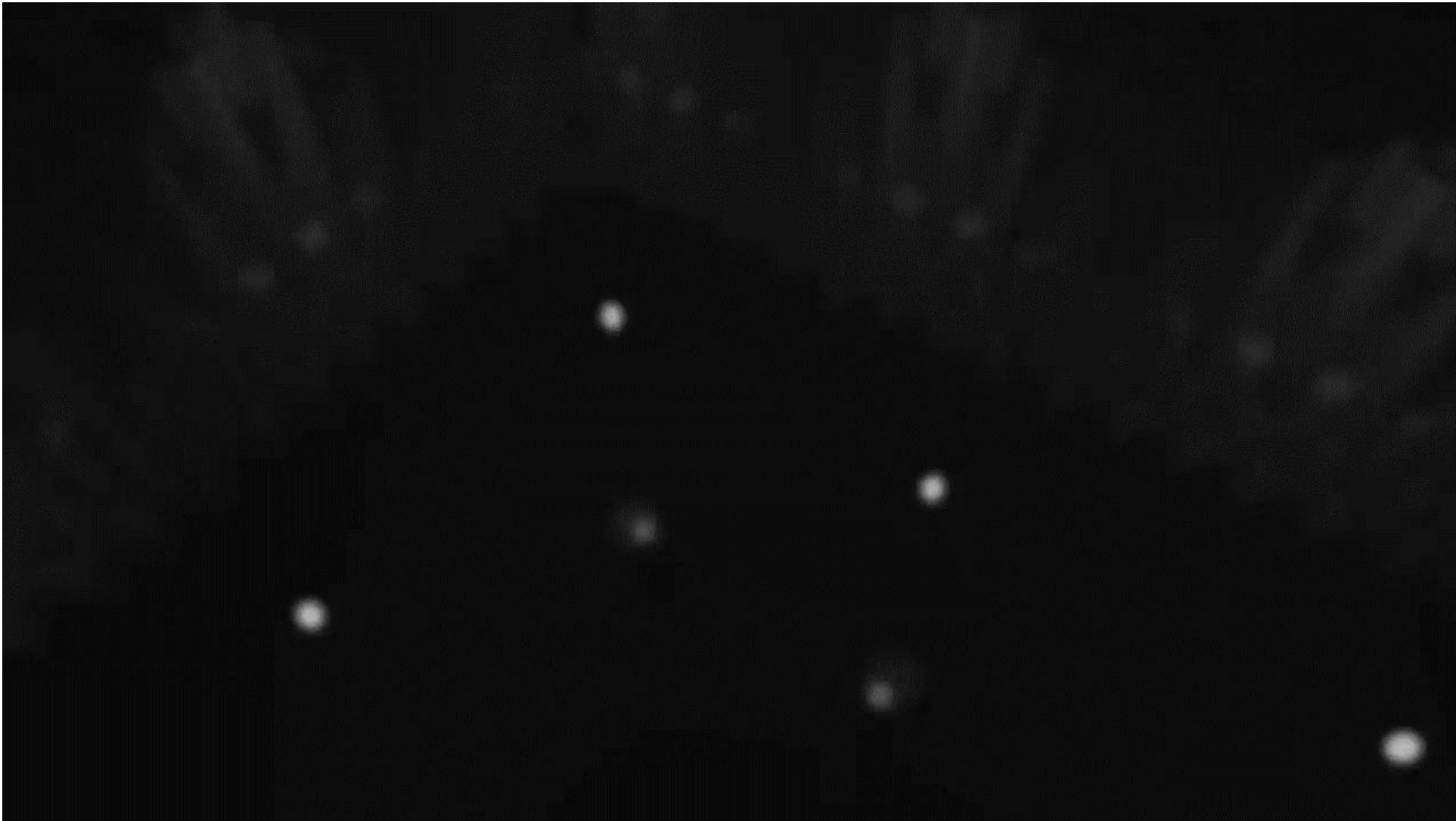


The CS WASH Fund is supported by the Australian Government
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Challenge addressed

No safe available method for emptying pit latrines in Zimbabwe

- FSM in Zimbabwe is mostly provided informally, unplanned, unsystematic and “invisible” to policy makers, with very little data and available information
- Most cities aim for full flush sewerage and see FSM as a temporary solution for informal urban settlements, or relevant only in rural areas
- Many small and peri-urban settlements in Zimbabwe aren't served by sewers; pit latrines are filling up, it costs 200% more to replace than empty institutional latrines
- Public and environmental health considerations (and the SDGs) require that faecal sludge is safely managed
- Vacuum trucks cannot access pits in dense settlements, or with high solid content



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Grant findings/ achievements

By introducing the MDU to Zimbabwe we achieved:

200 household latrines and 120 institutional latrines safely emptied

Supporting Local Authority – Norton Town Council - Despite initial concerns about competition between the MDU and the Council honeysucker, **NTC now** sees the MDU as complementing it's efforts

Anecdotal **decline in illegal manual emptying and disposal**, community appreciates the service - no complaints, No typhoid in Norton!

Appropriate technology: The MDU fills a real gap in safely managed sanitation, i.e. pit latrines in high density and difficult to reach settlements. It complements current FSM services provided by local authorities and private sector

Challenges faced

Challenges, setbacks or surprising results and how addressed.

It's not all about technology: MDU has all the hallmarks of contextual and market fit but viable business models, marketing and properly structured public private partnerships are crucial

Operator selection criteria: Commitment to social entrepreneurship and desire to serve the poor; business drive and focus;

Getting the Local Authority on board took time. PPPs not common in Zimbabwe. Little regulation on illegal emptying/dumping. Enabling environment

NGO/International development community also slow to engage on this new technology. Prefer to build toilets!

Potential for adoption and impact

Scale up is possible but with the following challenges to be addressed

Affordability and profitability: Balance essential, MDU hh market is low income, needs corporate and institutional customers (plus concerted marketing strategy) and possibly other financing mechanisms

Financing mechanisms for CAPEX for the current and future MDUs – high import cost

Size of pits vis-à-vis the capacity of the MDU: takes 3 trips to empty a large pit latrine and 5 to empty a large septic tank. **Strong seasonal variations** in demand for the MDU needs to be incorporated into the business model

Reflecting on research partnership

Describe succinctly the benefits and/or challenges of working with a research partner

International research partner (IRC) – provides access to global knowledge and experience, tools, communication and promotion.

Local research partner (IWSD) - approaches get embedded in local context, develop local skills, enable local research and knowledge and information management going forward.

Benefits for WHH - Brings structure, rigour and inclusivity to our approach. Improves our reputation. Gives exposure to best practice elsewhere.