

## 88. Tracking the flow of excreta across the sanitation service chain in Nkubu Town, Meru County, Kenya

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Inadequate access to improved sanitation and water remains a huge factor contributing to increased mortality and morbidity rates, especially among children. Despite the growth in economy and recognition of sanitation as a basic right, investment in sanitation infrastructure has not yet been achieved, particularly in low- and middle-income area. As such, nearly 827 000 people die yearly due to inadequate sanitation, water and hygiene. To track the flow of excreta in Nkubu town, Kenya, the existing sanitation systems were assessed, the proportion of community with access to safely managed faecal sludge was examined, the challenges facing service delivery was assessed. A descriptive cross-sectional survey was employed. The research instruments involved included observations for primary data collection and use of key informants' interviews. The secondary data was obtained from existing data. The Susana platform and the shit flow diagram tools were used for data analysis and generating the SFD. The data collected was presented using tables, graphs, charts and a shit flow diagram. The results indicated that only 28% of the excreta was safely managed. The pit latrines were the most used containment method with 45% and 3% of the population practicing open defecation, respectively. Only 40% of the faecal sludge taken to the treatment was properly treated and disposed. The challenges experienced in the management of faecal sludge were high water table in the area and high license and service fee charged. The findings imply that the unsafely excreta management practices in Nkubu town pose a risk to the health of residents in and around the town and the quality of water sources. This study points to the possible areas of interventions such as proper planning of the town and creating an enabling environment for faecal sludge management.

**Keywords:** faecal sludge, safely managed, sanitation systems, service delivery, shit flow diagram, treatment.