The ventilated improved pit (VIP) latrine

About 2.5 billion people around the world live without access to adequate sanitation. However, solutions to this huge problem can be both cheap and simple. With basic, locally available materials and some training, community members can build and maintain latrines that suit them and their environment.

The three main components of any latrine are a superstructure, a pit and a covering platform, as you can see in this diagram of the VIP latrine – popular in many of the communities we work with.

Superstructure
The cheapest superstructures are made from nylon rice sacks or wood. More permanent options include corrugated iron or cement blocks.

“Having a latrine has made a big difference because before I had to defecate in the bush. Life has improved and now my family do not get sick and there are fewer flies.”
Christine Adeke, Otitingo Village, Uganda

Platform
Platforms are usually simple cement slabs with either a hole cut out or a pan that you flush with water. They often have a hygienic plug to seal the hole.

“We spent five days excavating the pit (there were four of us young men). It took one day to mould the blocks and another day to line the pit.”
Sulemana Isa, Tamale, Ghana

Pick a loo!
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