

Role of NGOs In Sanitation Sector

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Abstract-All people and well being of a nation depend upon sustainable development, and for this, water supply and sanitation are essential requirements. Today Lack of sanitation and hygiene is a big problem in many developing and emerging economies . We go to the toilet about six to eight times a day. We cannot imagine not having a toilet when we need to use one. Yet despite all the progress in human development, 2.6 billion people - about 40% of mankind - still do not have access to proper sanitation. Each year, 1.5 million children under the age of five die of diarrhoea caused by unsanitary conditions and poor hygiene. When open defecation is the common practice, the flies spread diseases from the waste to the food. Sanitation and hygiene are the cheapest and most effective preventive medicines for the poor. Sanitation refers to the safe disposal of human excreta. Sanitation affords many health benefits, both in the narrow sense of disease avoidance and in the wider sense of enhanced psychological and physical well-being. Yet globally 2.6 billion people still lack access to improved sanitation. This fact sheet gives a brief overview of the many factors and lots of disease categories associated with sanitation. Followed by an exploration of the varying factors affecting the potential health impact of sanitation.

Keywords- Sanitation, potential.

1. INTRODUCTION

“The definition of sanitation is the process of maintaining cleanliness and dealing with sewage”.

As we know that **Sanitation** is the hygienic means of preventing human contact from the hazards of wastes to promote health. Hazards can be physical, microbiological, biological or chemical agents of disease. Wastes that can cause health problems are human and animal feces, solid wastes, domestic wastewater (sewage, urine and grey water), industrial wastes, and agricultural wastes.

Hygienic means of prevention can be by using engineering solutions (e.g. sewerage and wastewater treatment), simple technologies (e.g. latrines, septic tanks), or even by personal hygiene practices (e.g. simple hand washing with soap).The term "sanitation" can be applied to a specific aspect, concept, location or such as:

- **Basic sanitation** - It refers to the management of human feces at the household level. This terminology is the indicator used to describe the target of the Millennium Development Goal on sanitation.
- **Food sanitation** - It refers to the hygienic measures for ensuring food safety.
- **On-site sanitation** - It is the collection and treatment of waste is done where it is deposited. Examples are the use of pit latrines, septic tanks and other tanks etc.
- **Ecological sanitation** – It is a concept and an approach of recycling to nature the nutrients from human and animal wastes.
- **Environmental sanitation** - The control of environmental factors that form links in disease transmission. Subsets of this category are solid waste management, wastewater treatment, industrial waste treatment, noise and pollution control.

The standard sanitation technology in urban areas is the collection of wastewater in sewers, its treatment in wastewater treatment plants for reuse or disposal in rivers, lakes or the sea. Sewers are either combined with storm drains or separated from them as sanitary sewers. Combined sewers are usually found in the central, older parts or

urban areas. Heavy rainfall and inadequate maintenance can lead to combined sewer overflows or sanitary sewer overflows, i.e. more or less diluted raw sewage being discharged into the environment.

Industries often discharge wastewater into municipal sewers, which can complicate wastewater treatment unless industries pre-treat their discharges. The high investment cost of conventional wastewater collection systems are difficult to afford for many developing countries. Some countries have therefore promoted alternative wastewater collection systems such as condominal sewerage, which uses smaller diameter pipes at lower depth with different network layouts from conventional sewerage. Urban plan included the world's first urban sanitation systems. Within the city, individual homes or groups of homes obtained water from wells. From a room that appears to have been set aside for bathing, waste water was directed to covered drains, which lined the major streets. Houses opened only to inner courtyards and smaller lanes.

2. REASONS FOR SLOW PROGRESS IN SANITATION SECTOR

For many years, national governments, aid agencies, and charities have subsidized sewerage and toilet construction as a means to improve access. This approach has resulted in slow progress for two main reasons. First, the programs have tended to benefit the few relatively well-off people who can understand the system and capture the subsidies, rather than reach the more numerous poor people. Second, such programs have built toilets that remain unused because they are technically or culturally inappropriate or because the householders have not been taught the benefits of them. In India, for example, many toilets are used as firewood stores or goat sheds and a recent study showed that about 50% of toilets built by a large government program are not used for their intended purpose. Even when appropriate toilets are promoted, their technical specifications frequently make them prohibitively expensive.

Finally, sanitation is not an inherently attractive or photogenic subject. Before 2008, the International Year of Sanitation, sanitation specialists had failed to persuade politicians, the media, and other influential people of the importance of the subject. During 2008, however, there were many political events related to sanitation—notably regional sanitation conferences across the developing world—that resulted in Regional Sanitation Declarations, which have moved sanitation up the political agenda.

3. ROLE OF NGOS IN SANITATION SECTOR

- NGOs with trained workers have played the role of good activators and communicators.
- NGOs are better equipped to ensure community participation for providing sustainable benefits to the people than is possible in other set ups.
- NGOs and the workers have shown a sense of accomplishment and pride in their ability to do something significant to improve the lot of the community.
- NGOs are ideally suited to work as a link between the people's felt needs and the planning process.
- The NGOs working in the social development sector, which includes sanitation, have made Government supported programs more responsive to the needs of the people. They have helped in organizing communities to influence Government programs that affect them.
- The utility of NGOs is that they are in greater and closer proximity with target beneficiaries, creating greater trust between the Government and the people.
- NGOs shown greater commitment to improving the quality of life of the people and greater flexibility and responsiveness in different various operations.
- The NGOs and Government agencies should work in close cooperation and in mutually inclusive ways to achieve results in sanitation sector.
- The NGOs have encouraged people to realize their responsibilities in relation to sanitation and have made them capable of taking action on their own.

- Sanitation promotion is one of the most important roles of the **NGOS** and health sector can have in environmental health planning, because behaviors must be changed to increase householders' demand for and sustained use of sanitation, especially in rural areas where the pressure for change is lower.

4. CONSTRAINTS TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS IN SANITATION SECTOR

- The lack of national policies is a major constraint to success in sanitation.
- Other constraints to success in sanitation are population growth and increasingly high population densities in urban and per urban areas of developing countries.

5. STRATEGIES & APPROACHES TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS IN SANITATION

Sanitation is a complex topic, with links to health and to social and economic development. It affects many but is championed by few. From our analysis of the situation, we believe that few major strategies could achieve success in sanitation sector.

The most important of these strategies is political leadership, which is manifested by establishing clear institutional responsibility and specific budget lines for sanitation, and by ensuring that public sector agencies working in health, in water resources, and in utility services work together better. The regional sanitation conference declarations released during the International Year of Sanitation, in which many government ministers were personally involved, were an important step forward.

The other strategy is the shift from centralized supply-led infrastructure provision to decentralized, people-centered demand creation coupled with support to service providers to meet that demand. This strategy is transforming sanitation from a minor grant-based development sector into a major area of human economic activity and inherently addresses the problem of affordability, since people install whatever sanitation systems they can afford and subsequently upgrade them as economic circumstances permit.

Most successful demand-led approaches have been developed in rural contexts. Urban sanitation is much more complex, mainly because of higher population densities, less-coherent community structures, and the absence of opportunities for open defecation. Urban sanitation must extend beyond the household acquisition of a toilet to a systems-based approach that covers the removal, transport, and safe treatment or disposal of excreta. For on-site urban sanitation systems, pit-emptying services are common in middle-income countries where householders can afford the cost, but less common in poorer countries.

In densely populated low-income urban areas, community-managed sanitation blocks, used only by community members who pay a monthly fee for operation and maintenance, are an option. Public sanitation blocks that can be used by anyone, normally for a small fee per use, can be an acceptable alternative provided that they are well operated and maintained and have 24-hour access.

The another final strategy is the full involvement of the health sector in sanitation. The health sector has a powerful motivation for improving sanitation, and much strength to contribute to achieving this goal. Many years have passed since this Declaration, and the body of evidence about sanitation has increased substantially. The health sector now needs to reassert its commitment and leadership to help achieve a world in which everybody has access to adequate sanitation.

CONCLUSION

NGOs can and do make a unique contribution to the sanitation sector and more incentives should be put in place to support that contribution. Emphasis should be placed on building better links between NGO activities and the activities of other actors including government agencies and service providers at local, provincial and national level.

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This requires both NGOs to proactively seek to work in partnership with other sector actors, and for other actors including governments, utilities and the private sector, to recognize the benefits NGOs bring to sanitation initiatives and create opportunities for collaboration.

This paper has characterized the different forms of sanitation, coverage facts, reasons for slow progress in sanitation and highlights the significant NGO roles in the sanitation sector .While the practical experiences of NGO engagement will vary in different contexts the lessons are broadly applicable, and consideration of NGO roles and strengths is a useful framework through which different actors can consider strategies to maximize the benefits of NGO engagement in the sanitation sector.

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