

Putting Sanitation on top of the Political Agenda in Africa: The role of Civil Society



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Overview of Presentation

- **Definition of Civil Society Organizations + Examples of CSOs in Africa**
- **Sanitation challenges in Africa**
- **Status quo - political + governance aspects of Sanitation**
- **Why 'business as usual' approach to sanitation will NOT work in Africa**
- **Intervention areas for CSOs in Africa**
- **Role of CSOs in empowerment and capacity building in Sanitation**
- **Role of CSOs - overcoming cultural taboos linked with Sanitation**
- **Challenges of African CSOs**
- **ANEW and Sulabh International Social Organization - India**

Definition of Civil Society

According to the UN (UNCED 1992), Civil Society includes organizations which are involved in:

- **Service delivery – which develop and implement projects**
- **Representation – which aggregate citizens' voices e.g. networks**
- **Advocacy and policy inputs – which provide expertise + lobby on particular issues e.g. think tanks, research + watchdog organizations**
- **Capacity building – which provide support to other CSOs e.g. funding, training + awareness raising**
- **Social function – which foster collective social activities e.g. religious groups**

Examples of CSOs involved in Sanitation within Africa

- **International CSO Networks – Freshwater Action Network (Latin America, Africa + Asia)**
- **International NGOs e.g. Water Aid, Tearfund and World Toilet Organization**
- **Regional NGO Network covering whole of Africa - ANEW**
- **Sub regional NGO Networks e.g. CREPA in West Africa and Central Africa and NAWISA for Southern Africa**
- **National NGO networks e.g. NEWSAN (Nigeria), UWASNET (Uganda), KEWASNET (Kenya)**
- **National NGOs e.g. Maji na Ufanisi, Umande Trust and KWAHO in Kenya**

Major challenges facing Sanitation in Africa

- **Political challenges**
- **Governance challenges**
- **Institutional challenges**
- **Financial challenges**
- **Technical challenges**
- **Cultural challenges**
- **Implementation challenges**

Status quo - political + governance aspects of Sanitation in Africa

- **Low political commitment to Sanitation**
- **Consideration of sanitation as a household responsibility outside public domain**
- **Unclear + uncoordinated WSS sector policies**
- **Slow implementation of WSS sector reforms**
- **Very few African governments have specific ministries + budgets on Sanitation**

Status quo - political + governance aspects of Sanitation in Africa

- **In 2002, major effort to have Sanitation target added to the Water targets but**
- **Subsequent follow up Sanitation initiatives not commensurate with initial effort**
- **Bad governance – corruption in WSS sector**
- **Political instability leading to proliferation of half done WSS projects**
- **De-linked political leadership from society (e.g. very few Kenyan leaders have visited Kibera)**
- **Few political sanitation champions e.g. Mandela – Africa and Gandhi - India**

Why 'business as usual' approach to sanitation will NOT work in Africa

- **Gains made over the last decade have NOT kept pace with population growth**
- **Number of people without access to latrines and toilets in Africa has increased by 400m (UNICEF 2000)**
- **It is crucial to allocate sufficient funds to make a difference in providing access to sanitation**
- **Providing global access to low cost sanitation and safe water will require \$ 25b /year for 10 years**
- **This amount is far outweighed by current cost of poor sanitation e.g. medical treatment, lost school days + work**
- **Cost sharing among the beneficiaries will ease the financial burden**

African CSOs should lobby their governments to ensure that:

- **There exists synergistic and complementary alliances between African governments + Civil Society**
- **Governments make sanitation a national priority**
- **Governments respect major differences which exist between Rural and Urban (poor) Sanitation**
- **Governments promote good hygiene practices especially during public meetings by respected persons**
- **Governments accord high priority to school based hygiene and sanitation programmes**

African CSOs should lobby their governments to ensure that:

- **Governments facilitate data collection and analysis and utilization for planning**
- **Governments address corruption in WSS transparently and action oriented manner**
- **Governments do more to reach the poorest of the poor and the most vulnerable**
- **Create an enabling environment for increased levels of investment in Sanitation**
- **Governments tackle the specific and increasing need for urban sanitation**

African CSOs should lobby their governments to ensure that:

- **Viewing sanitation as a fundamental human right which safeguards health and dignity**
- **Undertaking genuine pro-poor commitments**
- **Factoring Water and Sanitation in their Poverty Reduction Strategies and Programmes**
- **Treating slum sanitation commitment as a national priority**
- **Ensuring that WSS utilities are answerable to consumers**

Role of CSOs in empowerment and capacity building in Sanitation

- **Increasing awareness, information sharing and training on Sanitation**
- **Participation in policy formulation and development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation**
- **Lobbying for more resources to be allocated for sanitation programmes at community level**
- **Pushing for additional support for structures to enhance information sharing at community level**
- **Promoting sustainable arrangements for continuous engagements, advocacy and decision making by all stakeholders at community level**

Role of CSOs - overcoming cultural taboos linked with Sanitation

- In many African cultures, discussing sanitation freely is still very challenging
- Latrines should be non polluting, affordable, user friendly and culturally sensitive
- Avoid a top down approach – be sensitively participatory
- Schools are the best places to teach culturally sensitive hygiene and sanitation messages and practices
- It is important to take advantage of traditional knowledge and practices e.g. Moslem habit of washing hands before worship
- Given the close proximity to grassroots communities, CSOs have a high potential in dealing with above stated cultural challenges

Challenges of CSO engagement with Governments

- **Mistrust between governments and CSOs**
- **Many CSOs have limited capacity for project implementation**
- **Some CSOs adopt inflexible (hard line) advocacy strategies**
- **'Brief case' NGO syndrome marring the CSO cause**
- **Many African CSOs find it difficult to develop customized home grown water and sanitation solutions**

ANEW – African Network of Water and Sanitation CSOs

- **ANEW formed in 2003 and registered as an Africa CSO Trust based in Kenya in 2007**
- **Nov 2007, ANEW has > 200 members some of which are national WSS networks with hundreds of members**
- **Secretariat supported by FAN/Water Aid**
- **Signing partnership MoU with AMCOW – Nov 2007**
- **Three years Capacity building project (funded by EUWF) operational wef Nov 2007**
- **Establishing 4 sub- regional ANEW offices in SSA**
- **Conducting advocacy skills training workshops and activities in WSS thematic areas including Sanitation**
- **Developing a tracking and alert mechanism - regularly informs CSOs on the status of policy formulation in the key areas e.g. Sanitation**

Sulabh International - India

- **Founded in 1974 by Dr. Pathak - an entrepreneur to liberate scavengers in line with Mahatma Gandhi's vision**
- **Has 55,000 members who work as volunteers**
- **Sulabh has marketed twin pit latrines across India over 500,000 hhs**
- **As of 2007, Sulabh has facilitated construction of 6,600 public 'pay and use' Sulabh sanitation complexes in 1075 Indian cities**
- **Promotion of biogas sanitation facilities – gas used for cooking, lighting, heating bathing water and heat during winter**
- **Sulabh raises its resources by taking 20% of implementation charges on its commissioned projects**
- **Need for South – South exchanges**

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