

33rd WEDC International Conference, Accra, Ghana, 2008

**ACCESS TO SANITATION AND SAFE WATER:
GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS AND LOCAL ACTIONS**

**Regional partnership for decentralised sanitation
and water delivery in 6 Countries**

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Delivery of services to meet required access levels in accordance with MDG targets requires a unique partnership arrangement that places the institutions with the mandate to play an innovative leadership role. The Local Millennium Development Goals Initiative operational in at least six West African countries and covering over 60 local governments, seeks to achieve this objective. Results of the initiative will be shared by four countries: Ghana, Mali, Nigeria and Burkina Faso with particular focus on actual linkages between accurate data and better planning, targeting of services to the populations that are in most need. Ground-breaking results and discussions will focus on advocacy and resource mobilisation through innovative approaches. Approaches to be used for the session will make it quite engaging and refreshing –posters, demonstrations, brief power point presentations and substantial time for interaction in syndicate groups.

Background

WaterAid entered into a regional partnership arrangement with ENDA Tiers-Monde (Senegal), training institutions, NGOs/CBOs and Local governments in Ghana, Nigeria, Mali, Burkina Faso, Senegal and Mauritania under a Local Millennium Development Goals Initiative (LMDGI) in 2003. The Partnership emerged from a decentralisation study in all countries which unearthed a number of critical findings including: weak local government capacity for planning and service delivery; inadequate sector financing; lack of citizens' voices in decision making; and ineffective targeting of services to the poorest and unserved populations.

The LMDGI placed local governments in the centre of efforts towards meeting sanitation and water targets through capacity building, data collection and planning for the delivery of these services to poor and unserved communities. Unique results include the availability of realistic local government sanitation and water plans, and the emergence of a new attitude and practice of lobbying and advocacy by the local governments using citizen voices.

When Local governments use citizen-led methodologies to collect and analyse data, prepare and market realistic plans for service delivery, both the authorities and citizens can lobby for increased sector funding and better utilization of existing funds. The partnership effort has demonstrated that achieving the sector related MDG has the potential of leading to the attainment of non-water related targets. This session will demonstrate different country perspectives on how the partnership has culminated in worthwhile practices leading to the attainment of water and sanitation MDG targets, deepening accountability in decentralized governance of sanitation and water services.

Introduction

Overview of partnership for decentralized service delivery

Mohammed A. Nashiru: Regional Advocacy and Policy Advisor (10minutes)

The overview account reviews the blend of partnership under the initiative, highlights key elements of the Local Millennium Development Goals Initiatives, geo-coverage and shared objectives. It will provide inkling on key roles of Local Governments, local organisations we partner with, and citizens, among others. A brief on decentralised policy and service delivery status in the participating countries will be described.

The session structure and rationale will be outlined for consensus before the substantive sessions begin.

Presentations

Creation and strengthening of LG water and environmental sanitation units

Oji Ogbureke, Head of Programmes, WaterAid Nigeria (10 minutes)

Outline of political context and extent of decentralisation process in West Africa. Current status of the social charter (i.e. between government and its people) and the role of civil society. Emerging trends in government's role e.g. service delivery, multi-sector partnerships, and growing entrepreneurship. Mapping of Local Governments in terms of capacity and commitment. Need for (a) reform, (b) capacity-building, (c) civil society-led accountability mechanisms. LGA capacity assessment – 7-dimension assessment tool and participatory process. Key findings on LGA capacity. Organisational Development strategies and LMDG-I capacity-building framework. Institutional 'system' and strategic options for institutional development. Progress to date and reflections.

Local government capacity building in planning and marketing of plans

Nicholas Sidibe, Snr Programme Officer, WaterAid Mali (10 minutes)

This provides refreshing perspective to citizens' participation and collaboration with local governments to collect and use data for realistic planning. Beyond that, local governments and citizens work towards generating funds for plan implementation outside the routine government allocation. By implication, local governments have become innovative through capacity building, advocacy and marketing of local plans. Case studies will be drawn from selected communes (Local government areas) in Mali, such as Dialakoroba, to illustrate this innovative approach, especially the ground-breaking results currently being witnessed.

Pro poor targeting and planning process in Burkina Faso

Yerefolo Malle, Country Representative, WaterAid Burkina Faso (10 minutes)

This takes into consideration the situation of water and sanitation service delivery such as inadequate provision of water and sanitation facilities in the poorest areas of Burkina Faso coupled with low involvement of communities in the local planning processes. Experiences will be drawn from the local governments of Saaba and Garango with focus on participatory identification of the poor, snapshot of both poverty level/ water & sanitation facilities and shared roles in validation by village representatives, community members, local partners, local government and partners organisations. Major achievements/constraints and lessons with their corresponding implications will serve as part of the main highlights. *Format:* poster presentation interspersed with formal account.

Citizens' engagement for service accountability in Ghana

Joe Lambongang, Head of Policy and Partnerships, WaterAid Ghana (10 minutes)

In resource-limited environments where priority-setting and judicious use of scarce resources is a challenge, citizen engagement is found to be the key method for effective provision of water and sanitation services and assuring accountability. In the Kwahu North District of Ghana, a citizen's engagement exercise - "akunta bubu" was initiated to enhance participation, dialogue, self assessment and empowerment between and among right holders and duty bearers in water and sanitation service provision. The various tools applied, i.e. Community Score Card, the "true" situation of the sector, key findings and recommendations for improved service governance and accountability will be presented for discussions. *Format:* interactive discourse.

Open discussion (60 minutes)

This will essentially be an interesting and exciting interaction on the four main thematic areas in small break-out groups. Apart from questions for further information and clarification, participants will be encouraged to share other experiences that will cross-fertilise the subject under discussion. Key lessons and recommendations will be developed under each topic and feedback to the main grand plenary.

Wrap-up (10 minutes)

Submission to group, tentative conclusions and way forward from the various discussions. These will be the tentative conclusion that will be elaborated for the grand plenary presentation.

Keywords

local governments, decentralisation, mapping, citizen engagement, advocacy, poverty, accountability

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