

Regional Partnership for Decentralised Sanitation and Water Delivery in 6 Countries

Introduction

Following the presentations, four main questions were discussed as follows:

1. What are the critical capacity building needs of local governments for water and sanitation service delivery?
2. What innovative funding sources can be explored to implement local government WSS Plans
3. How do we know we have reached the Poor with water and sanitation services?
4. What are the alternative approaches of getting service providers accountable in the water and sanitation sector?

The main highlights of the responses, agreements and conclusions for each question are as follows:

- Critical capacity building needs of local governments for water and sanitation service delivery were suggested to include
 - How to priorities and plan realistically for water and sanitation delivery
 - Operation and maintenance capacity to ensure continued functionality. If people see pipes functioning, they will be willing to pay for the service.
 - Lastly, building self-esteem and confidence of local governments: to take pride in their job and serve as advocates.
- Innovative funding sources to be explored to implement local government WSS plans starts with a plan. It is much easier to raise funds if there is something to raise it for. Therefore the first thing is to have a good plan highlighting water and sanitation priority needs. Other funding sources recommended were:
 - National budgets where allocation from core fund is insignificant
 - Decentralised co-operations – direct relationships or partnerships with the decentralised units involving funding.
- The private sector –still an unexplored area/source.
- Municipal bond – very new and promising.
- How do we know we have reached the Poor with watsan services? It was agreed that it is impossible to monitor everything and reach everyone at the same time. This therefore calls for focusing and targeting. Recommendations included the following:
 - Establishing measurements and indicators re: determine who are the poor, when they are poor (seasonality)
 - Get a baseline with specific indicators: re:
 - a) Coverage (number of people vrs facilities);
 - b) Access (actual use which requires a survey on use)
 - Establish whether other sources are used (preferred over the one provided)
 - Satisfaction –conduct a satisfaction survey at regular intervals re: annual to establish if citizens are happy to determine if we are doing the right things.
- Alternative approaches of getting service providers accountable in the water and sanitation sector were discussed. It was generally accepted that there is the need for service providers to begin to see citizens or service users as their ‘customers’. To achieve this, the following were suggested:
 - Institutionalize regular meetings using different platforms different levels and types and approaches)
 - Annual user satisfaction surveys to be conducted and compared across communities, local governments, regions, etc;
 - Alternative regulators or ‘authority’ be identified to release reports or scorecards indicating whether or not service providers and citizens are responding to their responsibilities;
 - Performance indicators –developed and fully understood by all, should be established and applied.

Conclusion

In the summary of Workshop proceedings, Chairman Brian Reed commented that 20 years ago, local governments were seen as not working and hence considered a structure not worth investing in. Parallel structures were therefore created to perform the roles of local governments. WaterAid’s experience working with local governments has proved that they are indeed the nerve center for development. They are no more seen as boring entities. The point is how to deepen our work with local governments and make them much more noticeable and engaging in water and sanitation delivery.