



Sanitation Fact Sheet

WSSCC-Bangladesh

Issue: April 2009

WSSCC-Bangladesh:

The Water Supply and Sanitation collaborative Council (WSSCC) is a leading international organization that enhances collaboration in the water supply and sanitation (WSS) sector specially in order to attain universal coverage of water and sanitation services for poor people around the globe. WSSCC was founded in 1990 at the end of the international decade for water supply and sanitation in 1989. The council operates with a mandate from the United Nations General Assembly. Its mission is "to accelerate the achievement of sustainable water, sanitation and waste management services to all people, with special attention to the unserved poor, by enhancing collaboration among developing countries and external support agencies and through concerted action programs"

The Council helps sector professionals to share their concerns, knowledge and experience with one another. It provides opportunities for problem solving, access to combined expertise, continuous dialogue on key issues, and publications which set out guidelines, procedures and codes of

Vision 21

- People come first
- A human right to basic services
- Entry point to human development and poverty elimination
- Committed leadership
- Hygiene and sanitation priority
- Gender equity
- The challenge of urban poor
- Institution's as change agent
- Affordable service
- Shared Water resources management



Snapshots: Grassroots National Convention, 2008

conduct developed by experts working together. The main mechanisms that the Council adopts to achieve its through objectives are:

- A series of global and regional fora, typically held every 2-3 years;
- Working groups, task forces and networks focusing

on selected developmental issues.

WSSCC Bangladesh Chapter prepared a position paper (2002) following a series of consultative meetings. Through this the members wished to encourage the government and development partners to extend their support in the identified key areas such as sanitation and others.

The Role of WSSCC-Bangladesh



Snapshot: Main entrance of convention centre

In line with the spirit of WSSCC principles, Vision 21 and WASH campaign, WSSCC-Bangladesh will contribute to the strategic interventions for sustainable development in the following ways:

Targeted policy Advocacy:

WSSCC-Bangladesh will highlight inadequacy in policy and practical problems in implementing policy as experienced by member organizations. It will strive to inform field realities to policy makers and suggest necessary reforms, including gender issues, for ensuring access to services by the poorest, achieving total sanitation, providing services to the urban low-income communities, and improving local governance.

- Improved synergy for scaling up services for the poor.
- Dissemination of regional and global best practices and experiences

Process:

In Bangladesh space and voice of the poor is marginalized. WSSCC does exist globally for the poor. From WSSCC-B perspective, it is important to create space for the marginalized in accessing standard WatSan services by the marginalized. Therefore it is vital to facilitate a process that would be instrumental in organizing a strong grassroots voice as a response to the set target and to state challenges that grassroots people are facing in meeting these targets.

In view of the above a national grassroots consultation process was initiated. From each union information on

sanitation coverage was shared in the presence of local elected representatives. Such community feedbacks were later shared with high officials representing City Corporation, Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA), Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE), Donor Communities and media personnel.

Grassroots National Convention was built on the above mentioned process. A Grassroots declaration have been approved at the convention and was sent to Pre-SACOSAN South Asia civil society meeting that took place at Delhi. Also above was circulated during SACOSAN-III. These processes have been maintained to collect the information from the grassroots and to reach National and Regional levels.

List of WSSCC-B Members:

WSSCC Bangladesh platform composed of National NGO's like BRAC, DSK, DAM, NGO Forum, PSTC, UST, VERC, International Organizations- Plan Bangladesh, Water Aid Bangladesh, IDSL/CARE, UN Organizations- UNICEF, UN-HABITAT, WHO, Bilateral- DANIDA, DFID, Multilateral- WSP, Academia- ITN-BUET and GoB-Department of public Health and Engineering (DPHE).

Remarkable achievement of WSSCC Bangladesh:

WSSCC-Bangladesh did play an instrumental role in making Sanitation as one of the important development agenda for GoB and organization of October as national sanitation month and SACOSAN- I (2003) in Bangladesh. WSSCC-B was the member secretary of the event. Government Ministers and civil society representatives from India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri- Lanka, Maldives, Bhutan, Afghanistan, and Myanmar were present at SACOSAN-I. Dhaka Declaration was made in this conference. WSSCC-B is the member of National Sanitation Task Force and at the beginning organization was founder member secretary of National Task Force on Sanitation of MoLGRD&C.

100% Sanitation Coverage Re Bangladesh perspective

Bangladesh Government has taken step to achieve 100% sanitation by 2010, well ahead of MDG target. A nationwide baseline survey was conducted in 2003 to assess the sanitation coverage in the country. The survey covered all rural and urban households. The survey revealed an appallingly poor sanitation scenario in the country. Only 33% of the households were found to have hygienic latrines, while 25 % have unhygienic one. About 55 million people (42% households) do not use any form of latrine. To boost up the campaign, a national Sanitation Strategy was approved in February 2005. Further, grassroots consultation has been initiated by the civil society and NGOs as a complementary effort towards government initiatives. Union-based sanitation programme is under implementation while GoB has directed the Upazila Parishads to allocate 20% of their Annual Development Programme (ADP) funds to address sanitation, specially for the hard core poor group.

Grassroots Consultation-2008 Updates

2008 was declared as International Year of Sanitation (IYS). WSSCC-Bangladesh observed that participation of extreme poor target group is fundamentally important to make the sanitation campaign a success.

In line with the government declaration to achieve hundred percent sanitation by 2010, WSSCC-B undertook a project to accelerate the participation of grassroots in Sanitation campaign of Bangladesh.

WSSCC-B submitted a project proposal to WSSCC global office for necessary support.

Main target activities in this project were as follows:

- Three Grassroots Consultation in each of the 100 Unions.
- Four district level workshops and two division level workshops.
- National Convention of grassroots and
- Support launching ceremony of International Year of Sanitation (IYS) and print Sanitation fact sheet.

In this process WSSCC-B as member of National Sanitation Task Force of GoB (Government of Bangladesh) played an advocacy role to accept "Grassroots Participation" as one of the main themes by GoB in celebrating International Year of Sanitation.

Government decided to celebrate IYS through five themes: One of the themes was "Grassroots participation".

Through these consultations key observations were made: a) Most of the villagers or slum dwellers are not aware of government subsidy provided for the poor in Sanitation. b) Union Parishad Sanitation Task Force is not active and Sanitation campaign is only limited to 'October sanitation month'. c) It was strongly suggested that visible participation of grassroots community is pertinent to ensure strong and sustainable campaign to achieve 100% sanitation by 2010.

National Grassroots Convention took place on November 9, 2008 and was jointly organized by WSSCC-B FAN-SA and Water Aid. WSSCC-B activities were well circulated through different news papers across divisions and national dailies and electronic media and a special 20 minutes TV program was screened by popular



Snapshot: Caroline Van Der Voorden delivers her speech

private TV channel named Channel-i. It is important to be mentioned that National Bengali Daily "Vorer Kagoz" and TV Channel-i was the media partner for National Convention that took place on November 9, 2008. Grassroots convention did select ten participants to attend Pre-SACOSAN civil society meeting that took place at Delhi.



snapshot: Dhaka Divisional grassroots consultation

Divisional Conferences took place on following dates:

- Dhaka October 28, 2008
- Chittagong November 2, 2008
- Barisal November 3, 2008
- Rajshahi November 5, 2008

WSSCC fund was utilized to cover cost of 501 consultations meeting in 167 Union Porishads in different parts of Bangladesh and for three Divisional workshops.

WSSCC-B was successful in raising fund for the campaign from Water Aid, Plan International, IDSL and DanChurchAid (DCA). Actual committed fund available was as follows: WSSCC- BDT 850,000.0 (\$12,408) (except operational costs); DCA- BDT 250,000(\$3,650); Water Aid- BDT 752,000 (\$10,890); IDSL-BDT 125,000 (\$1,825). Plan International supported above campaign, from their project budget and the committed amount was BDT 10, 00,000. Usually other supporting agencies made their expenditures from their own fund and decided to support different activities of the campaign.

Grassroots National Declaration

- The Grassroots National Convention reiterates its commitment towards strengthening the process through effective participation of the grassroots people at village, ward and union levels.
- The National Convention strongly draws the attention of the government regarding the issue of sanitation allocation for the hardcore poor and its proper use, and urges the government to ensure the effective participation of the extreme poor in the processes that decides the distribution of such allocations.
- The National Convention further asserts that the sanitation services for the women among disadvantaged group have been heavily inadequate and hence, this issue must be taken into special consideration.
- The National Convention urges that instead of eviction, the slum dwellers' issues must be resolved through rehabilitation; ensuring sanitation services for the slum dwellers will not require installing latrines at the slums only, but will also require collective actions to ensure their proper usage by the dwellers
- In order to ensure that the marginalized people do access to the sanitation services, the National Convention demands that both the government and non-government financial allocations for sanitation must be increased
- As flood and other disasters each year destroys sanitation facilities in Bangladesh, the National Convention demands to ensure technologies that would explore possibilities to provide sustainable sanitation services
- The National Convention feels it necessary to introduce a reward to encourage grassroots marginalized people's participation in processes
- In order to promote sector accountability and transparency, the National Convention calls upon the Union Parishads to share in public, the steps through which they ensure sanitation services are reaching to the hardcore poor
- The National Convention demands that the sanitation campaign must not be limited only in the month of October, rather it should be considered as a continuous process.



Snapshot: Rajshahi Divisional grassroots consultations

Main activities that grassroots intended to carry forward

- Observations that have been found in the grassroots consultation need to be discussed with decision makers in the near future.
- Divisional Grassroots consultations that were not possible to organize in Khulna and Sylhet have to be carried out shortly.
- Public campaign will continue to ensure visible participation of extreme poor and other section of the population.
- To strengthen campaign to increase allocation targeting sanitation service for the poor and extreme poor.
- To undertake necessary action to disseminate declaration of Pre-SACOSAN and SACOSAN meetings.
- To undertake necessary steps to convene a meeting of grassroots leaders to form a grassroots national coordinating group.

Urban Sanitation

Coverage of improved Drinking Water in urban areas decreased from 88% in 1990 to 85% by 2006. On the other hand Coverage of Improved sanitation in urban areas also decreased from 56% in 1990 to 48% by 2006. (Source: Progress on Drinking Water and Sanitation by WHO and UNICEF-2008). Dhaka has the only piped sewerage system in Bangladesh. It covers 20-25% of the city areas. About 40% of the households have septic tanks and about 20% have pit latrines. However twenty percent continues to use open defecation!

Grassroots Convention Recommendations:

- In slum areas land legislation should be established to allow development of sanitation facilities. Better environmental awareness and legislation are needed to reduce direct disposal of waste and excreta.
- Research on appropriate Sanitation technology having disaster resistant features is required.
- Engagement of Local Government Institutions is vital to achieve 100% sanitation.
- DPHE should take up the role as facilitator.
- UP/Ward WatSan committees should be reconstructed.

Sanitation Coverage Debate

Starting from the baseline findings of 33 % sanitation coverage in 2003, Bangladesh's sanitation coverage has reached up to 84 % till December 2008 (Source : DPHE, GoB). However, the JMP for WSS of Unicef and WHO -2006 reported that the coverage is 36 %. This mismatch is probably due to the definition dilemma of improved latrine followed by the agency concerned. On the other hand the reliability of data of the former also needs to be revisited as envisaged by the practitioners. Nevertheless GO-NGO should take initiative through National Sanitation Task Force to go for stock taking at the field level to bring the real picture of sanitation. This will undoubtedly help the policy makers and implementers to draw a real plan to achieve 100% sanitation.



Snapshot: Audience of Grassroots National Convention 2008

Editors Note:

Keeping in view the above facts, the Total Sanitation Programme has to be improved. The present latrinisation approach should be turned into total sanitation approach for long-term sustainability. The approach should emphasize more on Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials, Hygiene Promotion, Institutional Development, Capacity Development activities to increase awareness and demand generation for sanitary facilities. This will enhance people's capacity to choose appropriate options through alternate delivery mechanisms with beneficiary participation to meet their demands.

The Programme should be implemented with focus on community-led and people centered initiatives involving local governments.

Special attention should be given to vulnerable groups (urban poor, extreme poor, Hill tracts poor, indigenous poor people, people living in Char and Haor areas).

Reduction of water and excreta borne diseases must be prioritized.

GoB should encourage and facilitate the mobilization and strengthening of rural and urban poor in order to create an enabling environment to ensure poor people's meaningful participation and their rightful access to resources and services.

Useful links:

www.lgd.gov.bd
www.ngo-forum.org
www.wateraid.org
www.brac.net
www.unicef.org/bangladesh
www.dphe.gov.bd
www.wsscc.org

This documents including a video CD on National Grassroots convention is also available on the internet: www.dskbangladesh.org/wsscc.html

Note: Information/extract in the fact sheet is mostly taken from the articles published in "Progress on drinking water and sanitation" - UNICEF & WHO, 2008. WSSCC-B gratefully acknowledges their contributions.

Send your comments to:

WSSCC-Bangladesh

C/O: Dushtha Shasthya Kendra (DSK)

House: 741 Road: 9 BAHS Adabor Dhaka-1207

Phone: 9128520, 8122861, 8159656 Fax: 880-2-8115764

Email: singha@dskbangladesh.org Web: www.dskbangladesh.org

Editor: Dr Dibalok Singha,

National Coordinator (WSSCC-B) & ED (DSK)

Technical Editor: Dr. Mosleh Uddin Sadeque, PhD

Director (Training and Admin) INM-PKSF

Drafter: MA Hakim, Coordinator Advocacy, DSK

Computer Design : Akram Hossain

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