

CARIBBEAN SANITATION ISSUES: AN OVERVIEW

Presentation on CSD Panel on
Gender Sensitive Sanitation Policies
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COUNTRY SANITATION SURVEY

Countries Covered

- Barbados
- Guyana
- Haiti
- Saint Lucia
- Saint Vincent & the Grenadines
- Suriname
- Trinidad & Tobago
- Jamaica

MEETING THE SANITATION MDG

- WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) - Definition
- Access to sanitation facilities is measured by the number of persons or percentage of population having access to improved sanitation facilities for excreta
- Excreta disposal systems are considered adequate if they are private and if they separate human excreta from human contact
- These facilities include connection to public sewer, connection to septic system, pour-flush latrine, and ventilated improved pit latrine
- Unimproved sanitation facilities are: public or shared latrine, open pit latrine, or bucket latrine

MEETING THE SANITATION MDG

- Data from JMP indicates that most countries in the region are on their way to meeting MDGs
- Anguilla, the Bahamas, Barbados, the British Virgin Islands, and Trinidad and Tobago have 100% universal access to sanitation
- Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, Turks and Caicos, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, coverage falls within the 90th percentile region
- Jamaica, Dominica, Guyana and the Dominican Republic, coverage is highest in the urban areas, with ninety-one percent (91%) having access in Jamaica, eighty-six percent (86%) in Guyana and Dominica, and eighty-one (81%) in Dominican Republic
- Rural areas of these countries, coverage falls within the sixty to seventy-five percent (60-75%) range
- Haiti will not meet MDGs even with some improvement in urban sanitation

POLICY ISSUES

- No Caribbean country has a sanitation policy
- Jamaica has a draft sanitation policy
- Guyana is in the process of developing a sanitation policy
- Suriname, Guyana & Jamaica have aspects of sanitation addressed in other policies e.g. Poverty reduction
- Barbados and Suriname have given high priority to sanitation in national development and strategic plans

LEGISLATION

- Many countries regulate sanitation using outdated Public Health Acts
- Most countries have Solid Waste Management Legislation recently enacted (within last 10 years)
- Weak enforcement of legislation- for example, role of Public Health Inspectors diminished

SOME IMPLICATIONS

Long Standing Challenges Persist

- Multiple institutions with responsibility for some aspects of sanitation
- Roles of agencies not clearly defined resulting in overlaps, weak collaboration and gaps
- Legal and institutional frameworks gender blind
- Insufficient human and financial resources to efficiently manage sanitation
- Insufficient focus on rural and peri-urban sanitation

SOME IMPLICATIONS...

Challenges, for example, from proliferation of unregulated settlements are not effectively addressed

Sanitation problems remain hidden until they are blown away by hurricanes, floods and their impact are manifested in the health system

DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

- Development and implementation of comprehensive solid waste management plans eg, Barbados, Jamaica
- Pilot of Community Managed Water and Sanitation projects, eg, in Jamaica provide opportunities to bring people-centred & gender sensitive approaches into forefront
- Action research reveals *WASH* as a development issue and opens the way for policy considerations

DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES ...

- International Donor agencies and other national partners support community sanitation projects in some countries...these yield key lessons.
- NGOs and CBOs more active in building partnerships and pushing for policy- eg, National Organisation of Women in Suriname and CCPG initiated multi-sectoral Working Group on Sanitation.

DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

- Civil society organisations have pushed for Task Force on Sanitation to work towards policy and for a driver for Sanitation MDG.
- Caribbean Strategy towards
 - One entity with responsibility for sanitation
 - Multi-sectoral management committee to oversee policy implementation
 - Policy objectives integrated into national development plans
 - Public-private partnerships, awareness and community participation

DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

- Capacity building & training taking place to mainstream gender in water and sanitation- eg, Caribbean training workshop in Trinidad & Tobago; gender water and sanitation publications in Jamaica; gender, water and sanitation workshop in Suriname in October 08.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- Support the restructuring of existing institutions to effectively implement policy and legislation within a gender sensitive, participatory framework- eg, lessons on Sanitation Task Forces.
- Improve interagency coordination, with strong participation of community organisations.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- **Capacity Building**
 - Create partnerships between government, civil society & private sector to help develop young professionals and train communities
 - Strengthen grassroots/community organisations and the voice of women, to seek attention to community issues

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- Build institutional and organisational capacity for gender mainstreaming in context of IWRM in policies and programmes
- Link organisations at all levels and institutions into global initiatives and movements, for example, WASH promotion by WSSCC

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- Conduct dialogue towards more active collaboration with the national, regional and global women's movements to demonstrate the link between water, sanitation and hygiene to the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment
- WASH an axial issue in advocacy around Financing for Gender Equality.