

Water and Sanitation Crisis in Asian Region

Asia's water crisis is a crisis of governance. Many cities are still struggling to provide clean and reliable water supplies and are faced with common problems such as high non-revenue water, intermittent supplies, and poor water quality. Asia's cities also suffer from inadequate sanitation system or lack sewerage networks. A large majority of Asia's population still depends on rudimentary on-site sanitation facilities and septic tanks, causing health risks and pollution in surface and groundwater sources.

Poor management of water resources, aggravated by impacts of climate change poses a threat to water security. Problems such as non-availability of investment funds, lack of creditworthiness of utilities, unwillingness of politicians to charge for water, low capacity of service providers in the public sector, and weak water resources management are symptomatic of weak governance in the water and sanitation sector.

- Asian Development Bank

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water for asian cities



SOUTH ASIAN CONFERENCE ON SANITATION IV
4-8 April, 2011: Colombo, Sri Lanka

Session on Urban Sanitation including Public Sanitation



The Ministry of Water Supply and Drainage of the Government of Sri Lanka hosted the Fourth South Asian Conference on Sanitation (SACOSAN-IV) in Colombo from 4-8 April 2011. SACOSAN is a government-led biennial convention held on a rotational basis in each SAARC country. It offers a platform for dialogue between the governments of South Asia. More than 300 dedicated professionals, representing, governments, civil society, academia, the private sector, and the ordinary people of our eight countries, along with many representatives of the region from the international community, have come together to re-commit to tackling the huge sanitation and hygiene challenges in South Asia.

South Asia faces a severe urban sanitation challenge. An estimated 170 million people in urban areas of South Asia have no access to any safe or improved sanitation facility, and hence often resort to defecating in the open or in unsanitary conditions (JMP, 2008). While coverage for households seems to have increased (63 percent 2004 compared to 54 percent in 1990), the absolute numbers of un-served people in South Asian cities have actually increased. This inadequate sanitation has serious negative consequences for health, productivity and the environment.

Rapid but unplanned urbanization has also resulted in the growth of slums and settlements of urban poor. Provision of basic sanitation services in the slums and informal settlements remains inadequate, partly due to lack of space and the fact that people cannot afford services, but also due to significant policy constraints. Primary among these is the fact that the poor often cannot obtain land tenure, which is in most cities remains a precondition to get connected to

infrastructure services. Data on provision and use of sanitation amongst the urban poor is also lacking in most cities across South Asia, which makes investment choices, planning for urban growth and policy decisions difficult.

Without policy and institutional reform, more finance and infrastructure cannot resolve these problems. Many infrastructure investments have not resulted in safe collection and disposal of human excreta. Often investments are decided without consulting the community and eliciting their participation and ownership. Funds often get directed to infrastructure without incentives to change collective behaviour of communities. The result is low popular awareness about the importance of total sanitation and modes for improving sanitation. Operation and maintenance plans are also not always in place when infrastructure is developed. Across the urban landscape of South Asia there are examples of only partial sewerage networks and under utilized or non-functioning sewage treatment facilities, new toilets that are unused or used for purposes other than sanitation, and unsafe disposal of domestic wastewater which contributes to the pollution of surface water sources.

Despite official devolution of responsibility for sanitation in several countries in the region, higher tier agencies remain prominent and powerful, so that local government authority is diluted and multiple agencies – such as metropolitan water supply and sewerage boards, slum boards etc. – remain involved in sanitation provision. The fragmented roles and responsibilities leads to several problems, foremost of which is the lack of ownership, accountability and diluted capacity.

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At SACOSAN IV, the Water and Sanitation Section II of UN-HABITAT also organized a session on "Urban Sanitation" on 06 April 2011. The session objectives were to:

- review relevant experiences, including good practices, and recent developments in urban sanitation in South Asia with special reference to urban poor and marginalized communities;
- explore possibilities of regional cooperation in translating into action the recent initiative on urban sanitation in the region

The deliberations/ discussions held were around the following key questions during the Session

1. How do you prioritize urban sanitation ? Understanding the concepts of total sanitation in urban areas.

2. How do you plan for improving urban sanitation in a feasible and sustainable manner? What could be the technically sound affordable urban sanitation planning option ? How do you finance urban sanitation -Sewerage systems is not the de facto option?
3. How poor and marginalized people in urban areas could be integrated into city sanitation plans and development initiatives?
4. How to enhance capacity of the local government institutions to perform their mandate to deal with the urban waste management including sewage handling?

The session was actively participated by the International organisations like WSP, National and Local governments, Civil Society and Community groups, Service providers, Inter-governmental bodies, Regional and National Development Banks (ADB, National Housing Bank of India) etc.

THE COLOMBO DECLARATION

We, the Heads of Delegation from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, participating in the 4th South Asian Conference on Sanitation (SACOSAN) in Colombo, Sri Lanka, 4th -7th April, 2011, which was attended by Ministers, senior civil servants, grass-roots activists and community members, professionals from sector institutions, academia, civil society, NGOs and development partners, the private sector and school-children:

- I. Acknowledge that the sanitation and hygiene situation in South Asia remains at a crisis point; the numbers of people who practice open defecation or who rely on unimproved sanitation remain unacceptably high; since the last SACOSAN meeting 750,000 children have died in the region from diarrhoea which is strongly linked to poor sanitation;
- II. Recognise the potential of sanitation to empower communities and to be a powerful entry point for development;
- III. Affirm the value of the SACOSAN process in maintaining political momentum to tackle this crisis and in support of the global Five-Year Drive for Sustainable Sanitation and reconfirm the principles of good sanitation and hygiene set out in the declarations made at Dhaka (October 2003), Islamabad (September 2006) and New Delhi (November 2008); and
- IV. Renew our joint commitment to invest in the people of South Asia through policies/ programmes that deliver sustainable sanitation and hygiene to all.

Further to this renewal of our commitment we unanimously agree and commit:

- I. In light of the recent UN resolution recognising the right to sanitation, to work progressively to realise this in programmes and projects and eventually in legislation.
- II. To develop time-bound plans and to allocate and mobilise resources for delivering on all previous SACOSAN commitments.
- III. To design and deliver context-specific equitable and inclusive sanitation and hygiene programmes including better identification of the poorest and most marginalised groups in urban areas, and taking into account the challenge of protecting the environment and responding to emergencies and climate change.
- IV. To raise the profile of WASH in schools with the objective of ensuring that every new and existing school at every educational level has functioning, child-friendly toilets, separate for girls and boys, with facilities for menstrual hygiene management.
- V. To establish one national body with responsibility for coordinating sanitation and hygiene, involving all stakeholders including, those responsible for finance, health, public health, environment, water, education, gender and local government at national, subnational and local levels.

- VI. To establish specific public sector budget allocations for sanitation and hygiene programs.

- VII. To progressively increase allocations to sanitation and hygiene over time.

- VIII. To recognise the importance of people's own contribution to sanitation to ensure that policies and programmes empower communities to invest in and control their own sanitation solutions while protecting the poorest.

- IX. To develop harmonised monitoring mechanisms with roles and responsibilities clearly defined, using agreed common indicators which measure and report on processes and outcomes at every level including households and communities, and which allow for disaggregated reporting of outcomes for marginalised and vulnerable groups.

- X. To include in monitoring mechanisms specific indicators for high priority measures such as WASH in schools, handwashing and menstrual hygiene.

- XI. To adopt participation, inclusion and social accountability mechanisms from planning through to implementation in all sanitation and hygiene programmes at the community level, particularly for the most marginalised areas and vulnerable groups.

- XII. To build and strengthen capacity for sanitation and hygiene implementation, including investing in higher education facilities, development of curricula, research and development, and knowledge exchange and partnership development.

- XIII. Continue to ensure the effectiveness of the SACOSAN process by committing to report specifically against these and all other SACOSAN commitments when we meet again in Nepal in two years' time, inviting participation from ministries of finance, health, education and other relevant ministries in all future meetings.

- XIV. To support the monitoring and implementation of the Delhi Roadmap prepared at SACOSAN III through a country-led process of self reporting and the holding of an annual meeting of the Inter-country Working Group formed at SACOSAN I which would review progress.

We further call on Development banks, external support agencies and the private sector to increase their support to our efforts, to provide financial and technical assistance for sanitation and hygiene promotion, and to improve aid co-ordination for sanitation and hygiene in South Asia. SAARC to include sanitation and hygiene in its activities and to make a link with SACOSAN.

The United Nations to consider the reality of the sector in South Asia when formulating a new generation of Development Targets post-2015 and in considering modifications to the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme, to take into account the need to monitor community-wide outcomes and the high number of shared and community toilets in parts of South Asia.



UN-HABITAT supported APUF-5 on making Cities Pro-poor, Environment-friendly and Climate Resilient

The Fifth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum (APUF-5) closed its curtain after trying to find the ways to ensure that the fast developing Asia-Pacific region's urban prosperity is friendly to both the poor and the natural environment. More than 900 representatives from the national and local governments, civil society and community based organizations, research and training institutes, the private sector and international organizations in the region participated at the APUF-5 with the theme "Cities of opportunity: Partnerships for an inclusive and sustainable future". APUF-5 was jointly convened by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP) and 31 partners in Bangkok from 22nd to 24th June. As a key partner, UN-HABITAT played a significant role in APUF-5 by mobilizing stakeholder participation from across Asia-Pacific to organize and support the Forum's many breakout sessions and side events as well as associated events.

To start off, UN-HABITAT supported two associated events on 20-21 June: (i) "Regional seminar on South-East Asia Emerging Cities and Urbanization" in Vientiane, Lao PDR, jointly organized by Laotian Ministry of Public Works and Transportation, French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, French Institute of Research and Development and UNESCO; and in Bangkok (ii) "Internal Meeting on Gender and Field Operations in Asia-Pacific" to strengthen gender mainstreaming in UN-HABITAT normative and operational work through capacity development and provision of practical tools, methodologies and best practices. The highlight was the meeting with the Thai Prime Minister, H.E. Abhisit Vejjajiva jointly with four Asian housing ministers to exchange views, during the Ministerial Dialogue on "Citywide Upgrading in Asian Cities" hosted by the Thai counterpart, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security and co-organized by the Community Organizations Development Institute (CODI), the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR) and UN-ESCAP.

Throughout the APUF-5, UN-HABITAT was involved in the various breakout sessions and side events. As part of the "Bazaar of Ideas and Practices", the first and second parallel sessions included: (i) "The Urban Planning Café" co-organised with CITYNET, (ii) "Women in Cities" co-organized with SFWF and WIEGO, and (iii) "Climate Change Resilience for Sustainable Cities" co-organized with LOGOTRI, UNDP, ICLEI, the Rockefeller Foundation, UNEP, UN-ESCAP, UNICEF and the World Bank.

UN-HABITAT contributed to the third and fourth parallel events by organising: (i) "Urban Water and Sanitation in Asia and the Pacific", (ii) "Housing Profiles & the Global Housing Strategy", (iii) "Human Security, Governance and Social Inclusion in Asian Cities" co-organized with CITYNET, Huairou Commission and SFWF, and (iv) "Complex Urban Disasters - Are We Ready?" co-organized with ESCAP, CITYNET, ADPC and UN-ISDR.

The breakout sessions were complemented with the side events and those organized by the UN-HABITAT focused on: (i) "Operationalizing the Two Sets of International Guidelines on Decentralization and Access to Basic Services", co-organised with the French Government and (ii) "Bangladesh Urban Sector Policy and Urban Poverty Reduction Programme" in partnership with UNDP. UN-HABITAT also made a presentation on the tool, "Planning for Climate Change" in a side event "Tools for Adaptation to Climate Change in Cities" organized by the World Bank. To conclude, on 25th June, UN-HABITAT Water for Asian Cities Programme with Society for Preservation of Water organized a

field visit to the Centre of Excellence in Water Management, Lopburi, in which 20 participants took part. The Centre has a dedicated classroom for experimental learning by the students promoting Human Values-based Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Education.

During the APUF, the Asia-Pacific Launch of the flagship "State of Asian Cities 2010/11" Report was conducted. This joint publication with ESCAP reviews and documents the trends in inclusive and sustainable urban development throughout Asia-Pacific region.

Dr. Toshi Noda, Regional Director of UN-HABITAT presented key findings of the Report, presenting that: "Asia is urbanizing rapidly with 42 per cent population living in urban areas. Asian cities are engines of economic growth that are contributing with 80 per cent of region's GDP, and although Asia-Pacific region is leading the reduction of overall poverty in the world, economic growth has not benefited all urban dwellers equally."

Partners' remarks were followed from Dr. Stefanos Fotiou, Regional Coordinator, UNEP Bangkok, Thailand and Mr. Krishna Prasad Jaishi, Co-President UCLG ASPAC, Jakarta, Indonesia. The launch event featured special presentations of the Report to the Honorable Ministers.

Following the Launch of the Report, Focus Group discussions highlighted the urban challenges in the five sub-regions of Asia and the Pacific, i.e. Pacific, North and Central Asia, South-East Asia, South and South-West Asia and East and North-East Asia.

Over the three days of the Forum, UN-HABITAT featured Water for Asian Cities Programme, Myanmar activities as well as ROAP flagship projects focusing on Peoples Process. The Housing and Development Board (HDB) from Singapore was also displayed as the 2010 UN-HABITAT Scroll of Honour Award winner for providing one of Asia's and the world's greenest, cleanest and most socially conscious housing programmes. The Exhibition attracted a considerable number of visits and interests from the participants.

The Water and Sanitation Section II of UN-HABITAT also organized a Session on "Urban Water and Sanitation in Asia and the Pacific" on 24 June 2011. The session discussed mechanisms to make MDG doable and achievable in the next four years by discussing various options and share successful experiences from the Asian region.



UN-HABITAT and BASF supported Water Education Project Launched in Mangalore, India

The Water Education Project, a new initiative by UN-HABITAT under its Water for Asian Cities Programme and BASF Social Foundation, was launched in Mangalore, a port city in south west part of India on 10th May 2011. This project lays thrust on integrated approach to urban water management for the social, economic and environmental sustainability of cities.

The project with a budget of USD150,000 will facilitate augmentation of safe drinking water in 25 selected schools and the poor community around, promote water, sanitation and hygiene education in schools and establish a school led community drinking water quality monitoring programme through establishment of science laboratories in selected schools and capacity building of resource teachers and the students to facilitate the community and the City Municipal Corporation to adopt adequate measures to minimize water borne diseases in Mangalore city. Nearly 5,000 students from 25 schools in the city will be trained to analyze and monitor water quality. The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) is the implementing partner of this two year project.

On this occasion, as a symbolic commitment to the project objectives, Mr. Prasad Chandran, Chairman & Managing Director, BASF India Limited and Head South Asia; Dr. Hartmut Unger, Head – BASF Social Foundation; Mr. Andre Dzikus, Chief – Water and Sanitation Section II, UN-HABITAT and Mr. Pronab Dasgupta, Senior Advisor and Director, TERI signed a statement of purpose and handed it over to Mr. Praveen, Mayor of Mangalore City.

The event was attended by an eminent audience comprised of local political leaders, civic officials, key industry representatives, beneficiaries of the project and the people of Mangalore. Mr. Nalin Kumar Kateel, Member of Parliament presided as the Chief Guest at the event. Mr. Abhayachandra Jain, the MLA of Moodubidri; Mr. Praveen, Mayor of Mangalore and Dr. K. N. Vijayaprakash, Commissioner, MCC and others were also present.

In his address, Mr. Chandran said that as part of its observance of the International Year of Chemistry 2011, BASF intends to enhance awareness on how chemistry could help in solving the most complex issues in the world. He further added that "Access to clean and safe drinking water is a challenge for a rapidly developing city like Mangalore. The water education project will have long-lasting effects on a large group of people".

Mr. Nalin Kumar Kateel welcoming the joint initiative of UN-HABITAT and BASF urged to make provision for public sanitation and clean drinking water in rural areas as well. Dr. Vijay Prakash in his address mentioned that the commitment of UN-HABITAT in achieving the MDG targets with respect to water and sanitation is the foundation of this project. He informed that MCC is committed to provide water and sanitation for all. He further added that the city sanitation Plan for the Mangalore city is almost ready, and MCC has the target of making Mangalore a slum free city by 2015. He also stressed the need for support for schools in rural areas.

Speaking at the event, Mr. Andre Dzikus said that "Value-based formal and informal educational initiatives are keys to bring about behavioral change among students regarding water use". He stressed the need for integrating Human value based water, sanitation and hygiene education with the general school curriculum to achieve sustainability. He urged for political support in measuring the development of Mangalore city in terms of Gross City happiness. He also announced additional UN-HABITAT support to the tune of USD100,000 for projects in Mangalore.

Dr. Hartmut Unger expressed his happiness on the launch of this innovative project. He said "We can certainly make a difference for the children and I am convinced that the project will be a total success". He further added that for achieving our goal, personal commitment of all concerned are required.



Writershop on Healthy Water, Healthy Habits and Healthy People concludes in Mangalore, India

UN-HABITAT in partnership with the Project WET Foundation, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and BASF organized a Writershop on 'Healthy Water, Health Habitat, Healthy Peoples' at Hotel Ocean Pearl, Mangalore on 17th June 2011 as a support activity for the Water Education Project being implemented in Mangalore by TERI with support from UN-HABITAT and BASF.

Project WET is a nonprofit organization based in USA with the mission of reaching children, parents, teachers and community members of the world with water education since 1984. Its activities focus on publishing water education materials for classroom teachers, community educators, employees, children and parents and through training of trainers professional development courses for non-technical people.

The purpose of this workshop was to customize existing human values-based water, sanitation and hygiene education (HVWSHE) materials developed by Project WET for other countries to suit the local conditions. HVWSHE is an innovative approach that not only seeks to impart information about water, sanitation and hygiene, but also inspires and motivates learners to change their behavior to promote wise and sustainable use of water and sanitation. Experience has shown that values-based approach has many advantages: it can be integrated with ease into existing curricula; it creates a lasting impact through character development; and it is a proven approach in current practice world-wide, having been well documented and evaluated by experts. When coupled with hands-on and experiential learning, HVBWSHE can have profound effects on hygiene practices and behavior among children.

Mr. John Etgen, Senior Vice President & Project Leader and Ms. Morgan Perlson of Project WET Foundation were the lead resource persons. Mr P P Shetty, Senior General Manager, BASF, Mangalore and Mr C. D. Kumar, Senior Environmental Officer, Karnataka State Pollution Control Board were the special guest on the occasion.

The teachers from 27 schools, which have been selected for the implementation of Water Education Project, participated in the workshop. The entire programme was organized both in English and in local languages for easy understanding of all. TERI Project team played the role of facilitator.

At the Inaugural Session, the purpose of the writershop and its linkage with the Water Education Project being implemented in Mangalore was explained. It was informed that under the project Science laboratories in 8 schools and Water Class rooms in 2 schools will be established.

Besides water quality monitoring kits will be provided to 25 schools. Teachers will be trained to conduct class room programme on water quality tests for the students, who in turn would conduct quality tests of community drinking water supply/source. Through this activity importance of safe drinking water, point of use of water to prevent water borne diseases for healthy life will be promoted. Mr. Etgen further outlined the concept of the writershop.

Mr. C.D. Kumar highlighted the increasing demand for safe drinking water and the importance of conservation of water. He expressed his happiness that this workshop provides an opportunity for the teachers to learn about the importance of safe water and good habits to remain healthy. Mr P P. Shetty stressed the importance of the workshop and called for the teachers to carry forward the experience they would gain this workshop. He highlighted that BASF is committed to improve the lives of the people of the city, and the Water Education Project is one step towards this direction. He expressed his optimism about the outcome of the workshop.

The inaugural session was followed by technical sessions, wherein teachers performed various activities related to water borne diseases, their causes, preventive measures and good habits to stay healthy under the guidance of Mr. Etgen and Ms. Perlson. These activities were based on experience of Project WET working with other countries. The activities motivated teachers to suggest activities to suit local conditions.

At the end of the technical Session, Mr. Etgen expressed his happiness about the out come of the workshop. He informed the participants that feed back received from them are very valuable, which would be used for customizing the educational materials to suit Mangalore conditions. He further stressed that this activity will be of great help in improving the lives of the people of the region.



Mr. John Etgen explaining the classroom activities

UN-HABITAT & UNICEF support Promotion of Arsenic Mitigation Options in Terai Districts of Nepal

The Arsenic Mitigation Programme promoted different arsenic mitigation options as the alternatives to arsenic contaminated water in nine arsenic affected Terai Districts of Nepal. Benefitting over 44,706 people it has also decreased the vulnerability of people exposed to arsenic poisoning in these areas. The programme was carried out by Department of Water Supply and Sewerage (DWSS), UNICEF and UN-HABITAT, while the Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS) facilitated for implementing it at local level.

In Nepal, the first case of arsenic contamination was reported in 1999 by DWSS during the arsenic testing conducted with support of WHO in the groundwater of Terai. In 20 Terai districts arsenic contamination of groundwater sources is a problem. GoN established a National Arsenic Steering Committee in 2000. Since 2005 WHO has taken up the testing for arsenic in Kailali district, where around 65'000 wells were tested with its assistance. WHO thus provided its contribution to the testing of most of the wells in Kailali district.

Later, UN-HABITAT and with UNICEF supported DWSS in carrying out blanket arsenic testing in groundwater sources of 7 other arsenic affected districts including Jhapa, Morang, Mahottari, Banke, Bardiya, Dang and Chitwan.

The arsenic testing reported over 1 million people living in 20 Terai Districts of Nepal to be vulnerable to arsenic poisoning. They were compelled to drinking water with an arsenic concentration higher than the WHO guideline of 10 ppb. It also estimated that nearly 300,000 people were consuming water with concentration higher than the guideline value provided by Government of Nepal i.e 50ppb.

In response to the result of these testing's, the arsenic mitigation programme was launched in Bardiya, Banke, Parsa, Bara, Rautahat, Sarlahi, Saptari,

Siraha, Sunsari- the nine highly arsenic affected districts in terai of Nepal- to increase accessibility of local people to arsenic free safe drinking water.

The programme has oriented thousands of people on arsenic contamination. They have also been sensitized on the arsenic poisoning and its mitigation options. It has conducted focus group discussions at community level, made household visits and organized street drama shows to further augment their knowledge on these issues, which aided to create demand for arsenic mitigation options in these districts.

Addressing the developing demand, the programme has distributed around 6000 units of Kanchan Arsenic Filter (KAF) to help people treat arsenic contaminated water at household level. Additionally, it has installed 175 new tube wells at the places with arsenic free aquifer and improved more than 30 existing dug wells in these districts. The programme has also established a demonstration site of Rain Water Harvesting (RWH) System to introduce rainwater as an arsenic free natural source of water and encourage people for adopting this technology.

In addition to equipping the local people with safe options to arsenic poisoning, it has trained them on arsenic blanket testing and safe drinking water options. It has generated human resources at local level and empowered local authorities to cope existing arsenic problem independently. Resource persons like teachers, entrepreneurs, health workers, community motivators, local leaders, technicians, and journalist have also been trained and oriented for continuous dissemination of the arsenic issues in their locality.

As a result of the project activities, people now have access to safe drinking water.

UN-HABITAT's active involvement in Joint Sector Review Process in Nepal

The Sector Efficiency Improvement Unit under Ministry of Physical Planning and Works (SEIU/MPPW) organized a two-day Joint Sector Review (JSR) workshop from 5-6 May, 2011 in Lalitpur. The workshop aims at reviewing the existing condition of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector across the country, and finding an appropriate way forward for increasing sector coordination to achieve remarkable sector improvement.

The Honorable Minister for Physical Planning and Works Mr. Top Bahadur Rayamajhi, addressing the inaugural of the workshop, stressed on implementing urban focused water, sanitation and hygiene activities. He opined that those urban oriented activities should be replicated later in national level to achieve remarkable improvement in the sector. He also believed that the coordination and cooperation among stakeholders helps in bringing uniformity from planning to its implementation, monitoring and evaluation in WASH sector. Speaking about WASH service delivery in rural areas, minister Rayamajhi stressed on the replication and expansion of successful urban WASH practices in new areas across the country.

Purna Kadariya, secretary of MPPW told that different ministries, donor agencies, civil society organizations and other stakeholders involved in WASH sector should coordinate and cooperate to achieve Millennium Development Goals on water and sanitation by 2015, and National Goal of universal access of water and sanitation by 2017 AD. Therefore, he urged all WASH stakeholders to move forward undertaking a common action plan, and suggested for exchanging the sector information along with their experiences and learning's to make the notable improvement in this sector.

The workshop had been concentrated on different thematic areas of WASH sector of Nepal, which finally concluded with a 7-point resolution. The resolution has recommended for benchmarking the performance of local govern-

ments, and further enhancing their capacities. It has also suggested for establishing a national level coordination committee executed by a management team, and activating the District Water Supply and Sanitation Coordination Committee (DWSSCC) as a secretariat to increase sector coordination. It has highlighted on the formulation of operational guidelines with distinct roles and responsibilities of district level institution - DWSSCC for effective co-ordination and information sharing.

The resolution has also stressed on reviewing current sector investment priorities, and incorporating neglected and peripheral issues in addition to increasing financing in new and needy areas. The equal priority has also been given on developing mandatory provision to share plans and progresses achieved in the sector. Based on the resolution, establishment of an independent regulatory body and a post construction support mechanism is essential to ensure the functionality and sustainability in WASH sector.

The resolution has also prioritized on the Sanitation and Hygiene Master Plan – 2010, and suggested for implementing it at district level, developing sanitation and hygiene promotion guidelines, and forming national technical advisory committee. The resolutions states that water safety plans and a water quality database mechanism are essential to increase accessibility of safe drinking water in the country. To address cross-cutting issues, it recommends for forming Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) task force, and mobilizing it actively under defined action plan and guidelines. In response to WASH emergencies, it focuses on coordination between the existing emergency responding agencies and the concerned government bodies, and increasing accountability and responsibility on these issues. The recommendation has also been made for using the available database of National Management Information Program (NMIP) for the monitoring and evaluation of the sector.

Sukekhola in Kamalamai Municipality declared open defecation free in Water for Asian Cities Projects in Nepal

Kamalamai Integrated Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Improvement project declared one community, in Kamalamai municipality, the second largest municipality, an open defecation free (ODF) in March/ April 2011.

Centre for Integrated Urban Development (CIUD) in close coordination with local sector stakeholders, District water supply and sanitation office, District public health office and local Water and Sanitation Users Committees with support of WaterAid in Nepal (WAN) and UN Habitat Water for Asian Cities (WAC) Programme is implementing this project in peri urban settlements of Kamalamai municipality to improve the water, sanitation and health condition of poor and vulnerable residents. These WAC partners cooperate with respective municipality for the effective implementation of the project.

After this declaration, Sukekhola has become the first community in Kamalamai to declare ODF in the Municipality. There are 88 households (HHs) in the community, where 75 per cent HHs were practicing open defecation before the project intervention. The community people with support of the project constructed 66 individual toilets that helped them to bring their community to this stage.

In addition, the project also adopted an integrated approach in order to improve environmental health condition of urban poor communities, which firstly focused jointly on low cost household option on water treatment, sanitation, and hygiene. Since it needs huge investment to improve the quality of water at source, this project has opted to promote the Point of use (PoU) treatment methodology to safeguard the health of the community people. Community people awareness level has been enhanced through the trained water quality volunteers who are responsible to test the quality of water in the community and disseminate the result to the wider audience.

To improve sanitation, it is promoting low cost improved double pit latrine and bio gas. Most of the constructions were done using the local materials and local labours to create a sense of ownership and support the local livelihoods.

To supplement the local ownership local masons were trained and hired to

execute the job and has supported in income generation. Equity and inclusion has been the centre point during project intervention. Women representation in Water and sanitation users committee is overwhelming and has triggered the huge community participation in project activities. Disable and child friendly toilet has been promoted.

To demonstrate the low cost toilets and to change the mindset of those people who thinks toilet construction is expensive, the project used bamboo structures, cement concrete block and jute bags for superstructures of toilet.

This project has trained ward wise FCHVs and interested local women volunteers and developed them as V-WASH (Volunteers for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) and has promoted hygiene education like practices of proper hand washing, safe storage of water, waste management, kitchen management and grey water management for further better health outcomes through Door to Door campaign and to bring about the behavioral change in the community. Likewise it has trained Child Clubs and School children to safe guard the WASH activities basically focusing on sustaining the ODF status and to aware the communities on WASH issues.

The project is currently working closely with local authorities, Community Based Organization (CBOs), schools and Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHVs) to further improve sustainability and integration, and deliver project activities effectively.

Community based monitoring and evaluation (CBME) tool has been introduced for maintaining the transparency in financial aspect and raising ownership within community people for the sustainability of project intervention.

Likewise Rapid Convenient Survey (RCS), a hygiene monitoring tool has been introduced and practiced to access the behavioral changes brought by the hygiene related intervention.

In addition, the project has envisaged widening its activities in upper part of Kamalamai municipality focusing its activities on poorly maintained sanitation problems of small town which has been overshadowed due to the huge investment in water sector and lack of community awareness on the importance of sanitation facilities.

Community people in a programme at Sukekhola.

Photo: UN-HABITAT



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UN-HABITAT and Coca-Cola partnership in Cambodia under MEK-WATSAN

UN-HABITAT is cooperating with Coca-Cola Inc. South East Asia to provide water supply to 445 poor households in Praek Thmei town under the broader MEK-WATSAN intervention. The proposed project is being implemented in 12 villages in Praek Thmei Commune. The Project's main approaches include:

- Participatory selection of poor households who presently do not have access to clean water services;
- Upgrading and mobilizing the WSC to actively engage in the proposed project;
- Providing systematic training and capacity building to WSC to enable them to undertake their primary roles in this project, including developing capacity of communities for Water Quality Management : (i) Raise awareness of link between water quality/ contamination and health through public awareness campaign and IEC materials; (ii) Provide training in household and community level water quality monitoring ; (iii) distribute residual chlorine or similar test kit to the WSCs;
- Setting-up a local mechanism for effective communication and advocacy which aims at protecting consumers' rights;
- Subsidizing the connection fee for the selected poor households; and
- Mobilizing local participation and contribution toward

the cost of deposit and pipe extension.

It is expected that at the end of the project in November 2011, the following outcomes will be achieved:

- 12 WSC members and 3 commune councilors have improved capacity on (a) the national drinking water quality standards, (b) the terms and conditions of the water supply contract signed between the water operator and MIME, and (c) consumers' rights and advocacy; as indicated on the project training inventory list.
- Local monitoring and advocacy mechanisms to protect consumers' rights have been set-up and are functional, and the water service is improved, as indicated in the quality testing results before and after the project intervention.
- The percentage of households that have access to clean water has increased from 40% (1,342 households) to at least 53% (1,787 households) which will be in line with the NSDP target set by the government (55% in 2011 and 57% in 2012); as indicated in the list of households that would have connected to the clean water system, thumb printed by beneficiaries.
- At least 2,000 households (equal to 60% of the total population) have received direct education on the importance of having access to clean water and on how to maintain clean water, as indicated on the WSC tracking record.



"For the US, water represents one of the great diplomatic and development opportunities of our time."

"It's not every day you find an issue where effective diplomacy and development will allow you to save millions of lives, feed the hungry, empower women, advance our national security interests, protect the environment and demonstrate to billions of people that the US cares: cares about you and your welfare. Water is that issue."

Hilary Clinton

US Secretary of State
on the World Water Day 2011

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