

WASH AND THE MDGs

What is **WASH** and what is **MDGs**?

WASH is an acronym used to represent “**Water Sanitation and Hygiene**” projects.. Originally it is called WES (Water and Environmental Sanitation) but as at 2007, after the **UN** has realized that any Water and Sanitation project without Hygiene Education is not completed and would not be sustainable, they adopted the acronym that incorporate hygiene into the existing one. It is an integral part of the MDGs.

The MDGs are international target to half the World Poverty by 2015 or to reduce the world poverty by half.

Background MDGs and WASH

- **September 2000:** The United Nations General Assembly adopted the eight Millennium Development Goals that challenged the global community to reduce poverty and increase the health and well-being of all peoples.
- **September 2002:** The World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa, reaffirmed these goals (the MDGs) and adds access to basic sanitation as centre piece of the poverty eradication commitments.

The target to halve the proportion of people without access to basic sanitation by 2015 was defined in the Johannesburg Plan of Action (JPOI)

- **April 2004:** The Twelfth Session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD – 12) held in New York, reviewed the state of implementation of the Goals and Targets in the thematic areas of water, sanitation and human settlements. CSD -12 identified constructions to and continuing challenges for the implementation of these goals including the J POI targets on access to basic sanitation.

- **April 2005:** on the basis of the foregoing, CSD/-13 recommended policy action to be implemented by member States in addressing these challenges.
- **December 2006:** The United Nations General Assembly decided to declare 2008 the International Year of Sanitation (GA Resolution 61/192 of 20 December 2006)

The General Assembly encouraged member of State to take advantage of the International Year to increase awareness of the importance of sanitation to promote action at all levels, taking in to account, the recommendations of CSD-13.

November 2007: The International Year of Sanitation (IYS) was formally launched at the United Nation Headquarters in New York.

HOW WASH CAN BE USED TO ACHIEVE THE WHOLE MDGs

It has been proved beyond every reasonable doubt that Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) are crucial to poverty reduction and form the bed rock of a healthy, productive society. WASH Project will make a significant contribution to reaching the goal especially through action to half the proportion of people without access to safe water and sanitation, which are specific target within goal Seven. Sanitation is a good economic investment. Improved sanitation has positive impacts on economic growth and poverty reduction. Without health and education, people will continue to remain trapped in the stranglehold of poverty and disease. Below is how WASH relates to each of the MDGs:

1. ERADICATE EXTREME POVERTY AND HUNGER

Time-Consuming Water Collection greatly contributes to poverty. WASH programme will provide convenient water supply and this will allow people to look after their family's water quickly, freeing up the rest of the day for earning much-needed cash or tending to agriculture. In addition, healthy people are better able to absorb

nutrients in food than those suffering from water-related disease, particularly worms which rob their host of calories.

There are important side benefit from the establishment of wells and Pumps. Excess water is often used to nurture kitchen garden which provides a sustainable sources of vegetable to vary people's diets. WASH will also advocate the use of composing latrine which produces a free, viable and sustainable alternative to expensive and often polluting fertilizers

2. Achieve Universal Primary Education

School attendant especially among school girls is affected by time-consuming water-carrying burdens and poor health. A lack of adequate sanitation facilities in School also prevents girls from attending schools, particularly when they are menstruating. Convenient access to clean water and improved sanitation facilities in schools not only give children time and an appropriate environment, it also help to recruit and retain Professional teachers. So, Water and Sanitation facilities in schools make school more appealing and attractive to children even more than their homes. So, that will make them to yearn more for schooling than staying at home especially in developing world.

3. Promote Gender Equality and Empower Woman

It is vital for women to be actively involved in all stages of community Projects. With their details knowledge of local water resources and as the main user of future Water Points, women are best placed to choose the ideal location for new water project. Women will also be used as Hygiene Educators as they would be able to talk to other women freely. Involving women in projects has a positive impact on women positions and status in the community and in the society at large. Women are given the priority as a must to

be members of Community **WASHCOM** (Water Sanitation and Hygiene Committee). Any Committee they are forming in the community in respect to WASH project would encompass men and women with gender equality in view.

4. Reduce Child Mortality by $\frac{2}{3}$ for Children Under Five

Children are most vulnerable to those diseases that result from lack of water, injection of polluted water, poor sanitation and unhygienic practices. Diarrhoeal is the biggest single killer of children in the developing world where 5,000 children die every day from water related illnesses. In Nigeria a child die at every 4minutes due to same reason. Hygiene Education, Potable Water Provision, Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) Innovative Programme, School Sanitation and Hygiene Education (SSHE) Programmes will and put in places, measures to improve the health conditions of the children

5. Improve Maternal Health

During pregnancy, women in developing countries still have to travel far to collect water and a lack of Sanitation facility and available water mean that basic hygiene practices cannot be carried out effectively. After child birth, women are often unable to wash themselves or the baby. Access to clean water and sanitation help woman to minimise their chances of contracting water born and poor sanitation related diseases which maternal mortality and ill health to the innocent Baby or themselves

6. Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other Diseases

Over a billion people in the world do not have access to safe water and over two billion lack adequate Sanitation. Safe drinking water and basic sanitation help prevent water-related diseases including

deadly diarrhoeal disease. Improved water management also reduces transmission risks of malaria and dengue Fever.

Research has revealed that, clean water and sanitation assists **HIV/AIDS** Sufferer from early maturity of their illnesses. People contracting Water-Related illnesses are very likely to have compromised their immune system, which may cause them to succumb more quickly to the HIV virus and Develop AIDS-Related illnesses. Conversely, the immune system of those living with HIV will be less likely to fight or recover from Water-related illness. If people living with HIV can imbibe Sanitation culture and have access to potable water, their immune system will be better off and not easily succumb to the attack of the virus.

7. Ensure Environmental Sustainability

The MDGs target 3 in Goal 7 is to half the Proportion of people without access to Water and Sanitation. This is primary target on WASH and it would be strongly supported by all intervention on WASH project embark upon by our organization. We are working in local communities. We will still be working with other partners/stakeholders to ensure that appropriate technologies are used and that the completed projects are handed over to the communities.

By putting in place a well structured WASH unit or department, WASH project can be easily executed consistently and sustainably. M&E activities should be well structured to enhance sustainable development of project works. It should also include capacity building of primary stakeholders, TOT training of facilitators seminars and workshops for staff. Advocacy and awareness creation through various media should not be underestimated. Another key part of the strategy is to ensure all future water supply and sanitation Projects supported by any organization we are working with to

address the issues of water depletion and contamination through appropriate integrated Water Resource Management and ensure that they are inline with international Policy and Guideline.

8. Develop a Global Partnership for Development

WASH project can only be achieved through collaborative efforts. You can start feeling the trend, International NGO are partnering with Nation NGOs, National NGOs with Local NGOs, Local NGOs Partnering with one another, CSOs with CBOs, National NGO with government and government in turn with NGOs and so on. So, there is no limit to the extent to which partnership is needed in implementing WASH project.

This serves as part of a mutual reinforcing framework to improve overall human development. The MDGs provide a vision of development with health and education at its core and Poverty Alleviation as its Overall target. Development is not all about economic growth. Indeed, economic development is totally dependent on Healthy people having time to work.

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