

How do we select systems in peri-urban areas?

Workshop on water and sanitation in peri-urban areas on the 12th of December at 10.00-15.00
Norra Latin, Drottninggatan 71b, Stockholm

Several research studies show that some of the common features of the peri-urban interface are:

- A mix of urban and rural land uses and economic activities
- Heterogeneous and rapidly changing socio-economic groups
- The presence and activity of multiple and/or fragmented public and private agencies
- Location outside of the core of formal water supply and sanitation network

This co-existence of urban and rural features calls for an holistic approach when planning for sustainable water and sanitation systems. The combination of dense population and lack of infrastructure implies a new set of problems when dealing with water supply and sanitation. Past experience show that the problem is not just to present an adequate technical solution, but rather to implement a system that will function within the local context. What makes the peri-urban areas special? What do we need to know to adequately address the specific problems found in these areas? How can previous

experiences from urban and rural areas, centralized and decentralized systems, combined and separating solutions, as well as private and public organisations be utilized to improve the important work already in progress in the peri-urban areas.



The aim of this workshop is to look at and discuss the process of decision making concerning water and sanitation systems in peri-urban areas, primarily in developing countries, in order to suggest improvement of that process.

This workshop will focus on the following questions:

1. How do we select systems for water and sanitation? What factors influence decisions for conventional, separating or dry systems?
2. What kind of decision aids, criteria and indicators exists, and how are they used?
3. Is the importance of organisational and institutional aspects at the local level adequately addressed?
4. How can Swedish knowledge and resources contribute?
5. How can we connect to other networks, ongoing projects and international organisations in order to create productive projects?
6. How do we turn ideas into action?

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PROGRAMME

10:00 Coffee

10:15 Introduction

Anna Norström, SWH

Organisation and policies

Pipes, Policy and Path-dependency: Why is changing the public regime for urban WSS so difficult?

David Nilsson, Sida

Feedback on selection of projects for financing by Sweden

Olle Colling, Colling Water AB

Environment and attitudes

Water in Accra – consumer issues

Christina Lundéhn, Chalmers

Attitudes on urine diverting toilets in a peri-urban area in Kampala

Richard Minze, student Linköping University

Urban Water Toolbox

Erik Kärman, Ecoloop AB

12:30 Lunch

13:30 Networks and collaborations

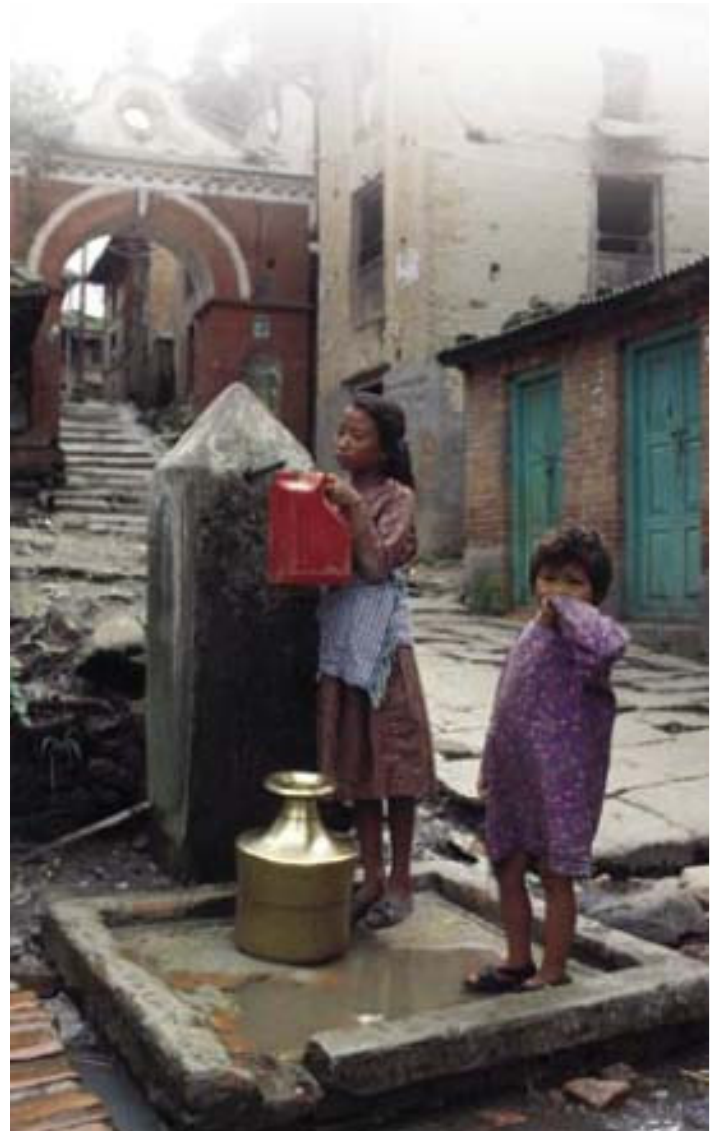
Overview of networks in Africa

Anna Norström, SWH

Reporting on an initiative by IWA: Sanitation 21

Barbara Evans, IWA

14:30 Closing discussion



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Workshop at Norra Latin, Stockholm
December 12, 2006

Is it possible to “select”? What do we mean by a “system”? Who are “we”? ... These questions and many more were discussed during a workshop arranged by the cluster group ‘Water and sanitation in peri-urban areas’. The following is a compilation of the main discussions and findings. Presentations from the workshop can be found on the cluster group homepage:

http://www.swedishwaterhouse.se/about/showProject.asp?event_id=155

The development of infrastructure is a slow process, and it is fair to say that water and sanitation systems evolve over a very long period of time. These systems are also closely linked to social processes and structures. One of the great challenges has been to match the supply of services with the increase of population in the urban areas. This is especially true in developing countries where a rapid expansion has occurred in the urban and peripheral areas during the last decades. We looked at examples from East Africa where the basis for the water and sanitation system are large-scale systems. Based on technology transfer from the west, originally designed for a wealthy few, these systems have not been able to develop in the same pace as the population increase. Although these systems are called public today, they are not. They are rather effectively excluding a large proportion of the population within the city boundaries. As a consequence there has been an expansion of informal systems, which in many cases fail to meet the demands of the people they are meant to serve. However, when there are large scale systems in place, they should not be ignored but rather build on them. One of today's challenges is how to use the available infrastructure and open up for medium and small size entrepreneurs, in order to supply adequate water and sanitation to everyone. In conclusion, there might be that no examples from the European history can be easily transferred to the rapidly growing cities in developing countries. They need to find systems that work under their conditions, i.e. systems that match the local context.

Everyone agree that water and sanitation should go together. However, the reality is that sanitation has not reached the same status as water supply. On an individual basis, wastewater handling and environmental criteria are not recognised as a priority or part of the water cycle and system. The same guiding principle can sometimes be seen in projects, where sanitation is just added onto a water supply project. Once the project is formulated it is already mind set, and it is hard to completely change the set-up of the proposal. The financier lay out the project, and the terms of reference will influence how the project is carried out.

There is a need to get the message out that there is a choice to be made. It is not enough for the donors or consultants to be aware. Change has to come from within the community. In Sweden the “environmental message” has been an issue since the 1970s, and that laid a foundation for public awareness. In developing countries the donor community has tried to work with the “health message” to make people use latrines. However, that has shown to have a low impact factor, other reasons are more important. Can an outsider ever understand the driving forces? The local community need to understand their own driving forces and make their own campaigns for success in behavioural change and to raise awareness into water and sanitation. Some of the objectives could be: affecting all to understand that improving for the poor in the society affects everyone; encourage key actors to start talking and form coalitions; support strong pressure groups to improve sanitation for all. External support might be needed in the process, but careful not to disturb or hinder local processes.

We discussed one example of the selection process of projects for financing, which is a complicated process that involves many steps. Following are suggestions for assessment criteria that are used more or less in all steps of that selection process.

- Relevance – to the overall goal, e.g. poverty reduction. Y/N and how much? Does it match need or priorities for the country?
- Effectiveness – will the objectives or the project be achieved? Is there an implementation strategy? Is it cost effective? Is the use of resources and financing appropriate and relevant?
- Feasibility – practical conditions. Assessment of how feasible the technologies are; how feasible is the external contribution; capacity and resources of the implementing agency. How much support, and what will they need to carry out the project?
- Sustainability – when external support is withdrawn after completion of the project, will it be sustainable?
- Development framework – strength and weaknesses between different stakeholders, overall organisation and cooperation between the different actors involved
- Risks and Risk management – internal and external risks for the project

A decision support system should preferably include: problem definition, stakeholder definition, formulation of sustainability criteria, assessment and multi-criteria aid. As many stakeholders as possible should take part in the decision to include the specifics of the local context in the process. Lack of basic knowledge in the area might implicate problems in trying to include the public in the decision process. One way to involve this group is to arrange focus groups, and use discussion output as input to the decision process.

The cluster group wants to develop a strategy or method for selection of systems including technology and organisation. The participants were asked: Who is the user receiver if we are successful?

Suggested targets groups were:

- The project owner
- Local key decision makers
- National NGOs or others influential locally
- Consultants
- Receiver of the original request for funding
- Bank, or whoever finances the project

Participants:

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