



Welcome to NAC's Internal News eBulletin where we keep you updated on key activities taking place in the Sector. Now you don't necessarily need to be there to know it. I am keeping an eagle's eye on it for you and my pen is your Informer!

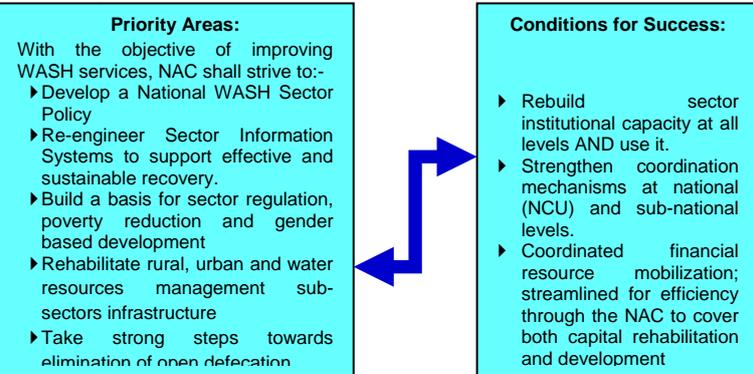


NAC Review and Planning Workshop: Zimbabwe WASH Sector on the Recovery Brink from Emergency into Development.

In the last decade, Zimbabwe experienced a decline in delivery of water, sanitation, and hygiene services in rural, peri-urban and urban areas. Results from the 2009 Zimbabwe Demographic Health Survey (ZDHS) indicate that the proportion of people in rural areas with access to and using safe drinking water declined from 70% in 1999 to 61%, whilst urban access declined from 100% in 1999 to 98% in 2009. For sanitation, the 2009 MIMS revealed that only 43% of the rural and 97% of the urban population have access to and use improved sanitation facilities, while 33% of the total population in Zimbabwe practice open defecation. Progress to achieve the water and sanitation MDG Number 7 target in Zimbabwe is off-track.

The above sad realization instigated the process of putting in place sector coordination mechanisms for effective and efficient sector management. This was reached at through a consultative process that saw the birth of a reconfigured National Action Committee superintending over the 3 sub-sectors of Rural WASH, Urban WASH and Water Resources Management (WRM). This new arrangement has provided for clearer sector leadership under Ministry of Water Resources Development and Management (MoWRDM) and has promoted effective coordination of all sector players and their interventions thereby giving a much clearer roadmap to sector recovery, restoration of sector leadership, and clearer institutional responsibilities amongst government agencies.

The rebranded NAC met between the 8th and 9th of March to review progress made in 2011 and plan for the 2012 financial year. This workshop largely attended by members of the 3 sub-committees and the donor community managed to come up with refined 2012 implementation work plans across the 3 sub-sectors. These were used to inform NAC priorities for 2012 later shared with the donor community during day 2 of the workshop. Below is a schematic view of NAC roadmap and the associated minimum conditions determining success.



A note to take home from the NAC review and planning meeting concerns alarming levels of pollution in Harare's main water bodies. Indications are that this problem has gone beyond the capacity of Harare City to handle. Noble answer might be having this declared a national disaster mandating central government and other cooperating partners to intervene with assistance. A starting point to this might be having the 2012 national sanitation week theme coined around this DILEMMA and send the message right.

Typhoid Outbreak AND Spread: Another "2008-09 Cholera Epidemic" in Making

Zimbabwe which suffered a severe cholera outbreak in 2008/09, unfortunately still faces significant risk to WASH related diseases, despite the commendable efforts by government, donors, NGOs and the private sector. Cholera mitigation interventions focused much on rehabilitation of urban water treatment plant infrastructure; provision of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials; drilling and rehabilitation of boreholes in both rural and urban areas; improvement of sanitation facilities especially in rural areas; provision of water treatment chemicals (mainly aluminium sulphate, chlorine and HTH); rehabilitation of chlorinators and water testing kits; supplying of water treatment tablets and the reorganisation of the WASH sector to provide effective coordination and leadership mechanisms. Regardless of all this effort, current epidemiological reports indicate another looming disaster in the name of **TYPHOID**. Initial cases of typhoid were reported in greater Harare area from February to July 2010 registering 458 cases and 8 deaths. Sporadic outbreaks have been reported in Harare since then with some form of containment. However, the situation worsened towards the end of 2011 as Harare got a serious re-attack in October. This also saw the pandemic spreading to nearby Mashonaland West Province affecting Zvimba and Chegutu; Mashonaland Central-Bindura; and also Chitungwiza where 74; 3; 23 and 10 cases respectively were reported by 28 February 2012. The worst affected suburbs in Harare are Kuwadzana and Dzivarasekwa.

Up to date more than 3 333 cases have been reported. What worsens the situation is that just like the cholera epidemic, the disease has now spread its wings from Harare encroaching into nearby provinces. These are red flag indicators calling for aggressive action on the part of government and cooperating partners. Be that as it may, the question that still remains unanswered is "...what are the risk factors to the outbreak of typhoid...?". Is it that there is something wrong with our interventions?; has sanitation and hygiene behavior change efforts from the cholera experience failed to sink in the minds of the people?; or it's another "GOD'S CASE NO APPEAL" kind of situation. These questions will continue to bog the minds of many as the debate moves forward. On-going water quality testing on boreholes drilled around Harare during the cholera outbreak are indicating varying levels of *bacteriological (faecal and total coliforms)* contamination-can this be the source of the problem?; People in Kuwadzana, Dzivarasekwa and many other residential areas in Harare have on average less than 3 hours of water running through their taps per day-can this be one of the gaps to plug?; many open spaces and playing grounds for children in the high density residential areas of Harare have **out of innovation by residents** been turned into small Pomona's for all sorts of solid waste-can this be the foe to bear the brunt? Analysis of the risk factors to this menace reflects a vicious cycle whereupon efforts to seek solutions to the challenge need to go deeper into the assumed causes of the problem, stem out the root and face it head on once and for all.

6th World Water Forum: Is the World Leaving Foot Prints Along to Define the Road?

Week starting 12-17 March has seen dozens of flight routes leading towards Marseille-France for the World Water Forum. This year's conference theme "advocating for a strategic approach to solving key water problems" provokes governments and strategists in the donor community to reflect on how best they can solve their water problems. So the major ambition of the 6th World Water Forum is simply to seek solutions for people.

In spite of the above sounding and vibrant theme, media activists still have a 'doubting Thomas' in them. They seemingly continue to bombard organisers of the event with questions as to whether water should be treated as an "economic commodity... or a human right...?" Also not spared by these human rights activists are big wigs in the water sector, World Bank and International Red Cross Society whom they are accusing of, "...using the event as another way of trying to market themselves and sign new contracts without a consideration of the plight of the ordinary man on the streets..."

The activists therefore take this conference as another "stuck event with no action". Getting to know whether these claims hold water for the 6th World Water Forum...we stand to hear from the Zimbabwean delegation out in Marseille as they give a report of their experiences and view points on what they think the forum holds for Zimbabwe and the future of water in the region.

My advice as I close this chapter for now is "let's keep in touch in the next bulletin as we get a statement in response to the above allegations regarding the Forum".

Zimbabwe Community Approaches to Total Sanitation: "Making Subsidies OUR Common Enemy"

For many years the strategy to improve rural sanitation services in Zimbabwe had two pillars: use of standardized technologies, essentially the Blair ventilated improved pit latrine; and subsidies to cover the capital costs of this service. After an encouraging start from Independence, this policy did not succeed in maintaining Zimbabwe's level of service access. Infact service access has stagnated if not declined. Following the economic collapse after 2000, rural systems have suffered a major decline. With the drying up of government and donor subsidies, Government-led rural sanitation programmes also collapsed. The supply-driven approach has thus failed to:

- Increase sustainable access, as rural households fail to replace filled or collapsed latrines,
- Target the most vulnerable households.

What this above scenario is translating into is a shocking realization that "nationally over 33% of the population is defecating in the open". These are predominately the poor as statistics brings out that over 82% of the poorest Zimbabweans have no alternative than to defecate in the open.

To put Zimbabwe back on track to the sanitation MDG target, a change is needed in the prior strategy. Government estimates that for the MDG targets to be met, 65,000 latrine units need to be constructed per year. This is more than three times the maximum output of 18 000 latrines per year achieved during the peak of the well-resourced Integrated Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Programme (IRWSSP) in the 1980s. A community led demand driven strategy launched in the two districts of Binga and Hwange will very soon start to bear fruits as the 2 DWSSCs tie up last rounds of their triggering sessions amongst communities. This strategy also intends to embrace the uBVIP concept in assisting communities to construct latrines out of their own pockets.

Other News Making Headlines

- Gokwe South VBCI pilot results out. Work has started on updating the data collection tools and the strategy in preparation for scaling up funded to the tune of \$0.5m by the GoZ through the MoF 2012 budget
- 2012 World Water Day Commemorations earmarked for Great Zimbabwe Masvingo in the 22nd of March: Another platform to sing louder for water.

Till we meet again, it's a bye bye for now!!

