



Links between the water and sanitation sectors and HIV/AIDS

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Links between AIDS, water, sanitation and hygiene

User level:

- Staying healthy
- Home based care
- Infant feeding
- Water for productive use
- Sustainability of water and sanitation interventions
- Changes in demand

Staying healthy

- Avoid diarrhoea, which is one of the most common opportunistic infections
- Knowledge on hygiene and safe water handling practices to reduce exposure to WS&S related diseases
- Access to nearby safe water supply
- Access to latrines

Water and sanitation for home based care

- Water needed for frequent bathing of patients and washing of linen
- Water is needed for taking drugs
- Water is needed to keep the house environment and latrine clean
- Patient needs to be able to go to the latrine near the house, which has to be large enough for patient and caregiver
- Availability of water and sanitation increases the dignity of patients

Infant feeding

- If the mother is HIV+, she may transmit the virus through breastmilk (high risk, 33%)
- There is an ongoing discussion on pro's and con's of bottle feeding vs. breastfeeding
- More infants die from diarrhoea than from AIDS
- Giving the bottle is expensive and stigmatizing
- Ongoing research on preventive measures also after birth
- Safe water is needed for all infant feeding

Water for productive use

- Water increases food security
- Nutrition can be improved with a good water supply
- Water can be used for income generating activities (beer brewing, crops, livestock)

Sustainability of water and sanitation systems

- People have less time for O&M
- Trained people may fall ill and die
- Orphans not aware of maintenance requirements and safe practices
- Funds for O&M may not be available from affected households
- Cost recovery is doubtful
- Affected households may not be able to participate in planning, decision making and implementation and their specific needs may not be taken into account

Changes in demand

- Increase: people getting ill with AIDS come back to the rural areas
- Increase: orphans coming to live with relatives
- Increase: more water needed for care
- Increase: interest in latrines
- Decrease: people dying of AIDS
- Decrease: people migrating to the cities for medical assistance or because the parents have died

Strategies at community level

- Increase access to sufficient water and sanitation
- Integrate AIDS concerns in community mobilisation
- Ensure AIDS affected households participate in planning
- Ensure hygiene education incorporates linkages to HIV/AIDS and is also given to home based care givers
- Facilitate communities to develop AIDS responsive O&M systems
- Train more water operators

Links between AIDS, water, sanitation and hygiene at provider level

- Decrease in productive staff will result in lower construction capacity and quality; in decrease in technical support for maintenance and quality monitoring; in reduced capacity for hygiene education
- Organisational management will be affected by loss of knowledge and capacity, by systems that cannot hire new staff in case of illness, by reduction of available skilled and experienced people in the country
- Reduced budget affects provision of new systems

Analysis of impact of HIV/AIDS on water sector organisations

Internal:

- How can staff infections be prevented
- What can be done about impacts of existing staff infections

Prevention of new infections

- HIV prevention education and information
- Peer education programmes
- Condom distribution and availability
- Adjust working conditions to reduce susceptibility
- Linking with organisations that provide prevention services such as VCT, STI treatment, health services
- Promote a supportive working environment
- Ensure confidentiality

Minimising the impact on the functioning of the organisation (1)

- Adapt and reorganise work if needed
- Develop systems to incorporate HIV/AIDS in human resource planning
- Consider strategies of multi-skilling and reserve labour
- Develop performance appraisal systems to identify and manage impacts on productivity

Minimising the impact on the functioning of the organisation (2)

- Develop training system (on the job) to ensure key skills are shared among several staff members
- Develop a system in which need for new recruitments is identified timely
- Plan for difficulties in finding new skilled staff

Who should do this?

- Commitment needed at highest level
- Development of policy with staff involvement from all section
- Focal points, HIV/AIDS committees, existing staff organisations with sufficient authority and capacity (not added on to existing workload)
- Trained managers

Challenges

- Non interest with management
- Stigma leading to inability for discussions
- Support to staff that does not disclose
- How to reconcile confidentiality with openness

External impact on the water sector

- How might the work of the sector increase vulnerability to HIV infection or reduce the capacity of households/communities to deal with the impact of AIDS
- How might HIV and AIDS impact on the goals, objectives and programmes of the sector
- What should the sector do to respond to this
- How can this be done in practice
- How could progress be measured

Examples of impacts

- Sector staff may bring HIV infection to communities
- The community management paradigm may exclude those most in need of water
- Public private partnerships and the private sector may not be responsive to changed demands and ability to pay
- It is unlikely that MDG goals and poverty alleviation strategies will be achieved if strategies are not adapted to the HIV/AIDS context

Policies and strategies for the water sector (1)

- Develop strategies to ensure information and education to care givers, PLWHA and their families on how to reduce exposure to water and sanitation related diseases
- Establish clear water and sanitation standards
- Redefine domestic water supply to include not only water for basic needs but also water for small scale production
- Developing and offering technologies that require least labour for operation and maintenance, home based water treatment and sanitation

Policies and strategies for the water sector (2)

- Speed up funding for water and sanitation coverage in rural areas and low-income urban settlements, especially those areas most affected by the epidemic
- Create mechanisms for poor people in general and PLWHA and women in specific, to establish their needs and to influence water and sanitation decisions
- Placing access to water and sanitation in the political arena (creating a lobby)

Policies and strategies for the water sector (3)

- Addressing inequality in assets and incomes by including social protection measures for the poorest and adapting cost recovery strategies to accommodate the poorest (often AIDS stricken) households