



Sanitation Partnerships Masterclass 2 Page Overview

September 2008

Background

Globally, despite an increase of almost 40% in the number of people served with improved sanitation over 1990-2004 the deficit of urban unserved is growing. According to current projections, the number of urban dwellers without access to improved sanitation will see an increase of almost 50% from 1990 to 2015.

Within urban areas there is tremendous disparity in access to sanitation between people living in slums and the rest of the city - it is not uncommon for coverage in slums to be half that of the rest of the city. While some promising progress is being made in rural sanitation, particularly in South Asia, urban sanitation figures globally are largely stagnating and in some countries will likely hold back achievement of targets.

The silver lining is that in recent years a number of promising approaches to urban sanitation have emerged, including community managed toilet washing and bathing complexes, component sharing, pit emptying enterprises etc. Furthermore a number of approaches proving successful in rural areas are now being tried in urban areas, for example CLTS and social marketing. These all have one thing in common – their success or failure hinges on much more than technological choice or sufficient financing – the relationships that underpin and maintain them are crucial.

Unfortunately, although sanitation is clearly a crucial issue, less is known about partnerships for sanitation – for instance under what circumstances they are appropriate and how they prove effective or ineffective in differing contexts. BPD began to fill this knowledge gap by conducting research on urban sanitation partnerships in 5 African cities in 2005/06. Given the only feasible mid-term solution for many poor urban communities is on-site sanitation, and that its non-networked nature throws up new challenges, on-site programmes and their wider links were the principal focus of the work. Findings from the case studies led to examination of the challenges thrown up by high proportions of renter populations in slums and the complicated systems needed in urban areas to move from excreta collection to sustainable excreta management. IRC too has experience in sanitation partnerships – theirs in understanding and building Learning Alliances. These are multi-stakeholder and are oriented at turning local innovation into sustainable and integrated solutions at scale. A key feature is their impact on policy and practice and their understanding of how sanitation's particular relationships play out at the policy level.



The Masterclass

Has three key objectives:

1. To help practitioners and policymakers better understand the circumstances in which partnerships for on-site sanitation delivery can be effective (and highlight when they are not) and provide principles to help those planning or participating in such partnerships.
2. Get practitioners from different sectors (civil society, government, private sector) to talk through real-life case studies involving sanitation delivery, unpacking the incentives and disincentives for collaboration and the impact that partnership has had on the ground.
3. To help practitioners cut through much of the complexity of sanitation partnerships, giving them a robust set of tools with which to plan and negotiate partnerships on the ground.

The starting premise is that participants have as much to learn from each other as they do the day's tutors. Groupwork and back and forth exchange between participants will be mixed with other training methods to achieve these three objectives.

Focus & Key Messages

By focusing on the incentives that drive households, sanitation providers and public bodies, four inter-linked aspects will be explored together by practitioners, case study representatives and Masterclass tutors.

Aspect 1: Providers of sanitation goods and services are vital, yet often undervalued. Partnerships are a good way of harnessing these providers in order to make sanitation more accessible to households and poor communities.

Aspect 2: For households the decision to invest in sanitation is rarely driven by health or environmental considerations but driven by comfort, dignity and status. Partnerships are a viable means of leading from these private drivers to public good outcomes such as improved health.

Aspect 3: Sustainable excreta management comprises a delivery chain of collection, removal, transport, treatment, reuse or disposal that is often fragmented (as a system and institutionally). Partnerships can be invaluable in getting this delivery chain to function effectively.

Aspect 4: Sanitation suffers from a high degree of institutional fragmentation – both within the public sector and, beyond this, into the realm of sanitation service providers and others. Partnership, while difficult, offers one means for overcoming such fragmentation.