



Comparing National Sanitation Policy Content

An initial review of nine country profiles



Summary

As part of research assessing the effectiveness of national sanitation policies, in 2003 the contents of 9 national policy documents were reviewed:

- Bangladesh – National Policy for Water Supply and Sanitation, 1998
- Cambodia – National Policy on Urban Sanitation, September 1999
- Ghana – Environmental Sanitation Policy, published 1999
- Indonesia – National Policy for the Development of Community-Managed Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation Facilities and Services, 2002 (draft 3)
- Mozambique – National Water Policy, 1995
- Nepal – National Sanitation Policy, July 1994
- Nigeria – National Water Supply and Sanitation Policy, 2000
- South Africa – White Paper on Basic Household Sanitation, 2001
- Uganda – National Environmental Health Policy for Uganda, April 2003 (draft)

The review addressed questions concerning key elements of policy, as identified in the USAID's Environmental Health Project (EHP) report Guidelines for the assessment of national sanitation policies (Elledge et al, 2002, Section 3). Additional questions provide background information on the scope of the policy, when and how it was produced.

Findings of this review are in the table that follows.

Key findings

- **Targets and resources:** None of the policies attempt to quantify targets or identify the resources to be budgeted for sanitation improvements other than in a very general way.
- **Assessment of the existing situation:** Few of the policies provide more than a very general assessment of the existing situation in the country to which they relate. Some reflect the current thinking and priorities of international agencies.
- **Targeted groups:** Some, but not all, policies make reference to the specific needs of target groups, e.g. the urban poor, residents of small towns, inhabitants of rural communities. In most cases, reference is made to the needs of some of these groups. A few make very general reference to programmes or budgets targeted at these groups.
 - The Uganda policy makes reference to the needs of urban and peri-urban populations, while the South Africa policy focuses on the needs of rural communities and informal settlements.
- **Minimum levels of service:** None of the policies specify minimum service levels, although broad reference is given in the South Africa policy.
- **Related ministries:** In most cases, neither the Ministry of Health nor the Ministry of Environment has been specifically mentioned as being involved in the preparation of policy.
 - In South Africa, both ministries were represented in the Task Team that developed the policy. In Uganda the Ministry of Health is the lead agency.
- **Health considerations:** Most of the policies reviewed have a specific concern with health.
 - The South Africa and Uganda policies provide background information on the types and magnitude of health problems arising from poor sanitation.



Sanitation finds a home in South Africa

Lack of sound institutional frameworks is a major cause of failed sanitation provision. Sanitation rarely has a clear institutional “home”, resulting in fragmented responsibilities, lack of ownership and poor coordination.

South Africa has pioneered “joined-up thinking” through its innovative national sanitation policy; a particularly striking feature is the multi-sectoral approach to sanitation provision. Whilst overall responsibility for sanitation rests with a specific department, the programme development and implementation is actually achieved by multi-sectoral partnership involving the household, local government, NGOs, private sector, provincial government and the central government. The institutional and organizational framework clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of these stakeholders¹.

- **Environmental considerations:** Most policies include general references to the need to protect the environment, but none indicates the magnitude of sanitation-related environmental problems.
- **Cost of sanitation:** Few of the policies provide any indication of the cost of meeting sanitation needs.
 - The South Africa policy provides information on the maximum capital and O&M cost per household.
- **Subsidies for capital:** Most policies allow for some subsidy of capital costs.
 - The Ghana policy explicitly allows financial allocations from national government to subsidize the recurrent costs of municipal systems. The Uganda policy states that capital subsidy should be allowed for the poorest, those living in areas with poor ground conditions, tenants and people in transit.
- **Hygiene education:** The Nepal, South Africa and Uganda policies refer to the need to fund hygiene education. However, only South Africa defines what the subsidy should be (R600 per household at the time) and identifies its source (Department of Water Affairs and Forestry).
- **Institutional arrangements:** Most policies provide general rather than specific guidance on institutional policies and roles. Some provide general guidance on the options for correcting institutional weaknesses. Most, but not all, policies identify a lead agency for coordinating sanitation activities.
 - The South Africa policy is the only one to clearly identify roles and responsibilities for related government ministries (Ministry of Health, Education).
- **Technical/social aspects:** Most policies recognize the need to take account of concerns relating to both technical (‘hardware’, such as design options for latrines) and social (‘software’, such as awareness raising) aspects of sanitation provision. Some give a good balance between these concerns, while others focus mainly on software aspects of provision.

While social aspects may dominate in the wording of policy; allocation of budgets, roles and responsibilities, together with specific aspects relating to hygiene education, are not clearly identified. The concern for social aspects may therefore be more theoretical, responding to perceptions of current best practice, rather than enabling action at the community or household level.



Questions	Bangladesh	Cambodia ⁽¹⁾	Ghana	Indonesia	Mozambique	Nepal	Nigeria	South Africa	Uganda
General questions									
Is the policy separate or combined with water supply?	Combined	Separate	Separate	Combined	Combined (called national water policy)	Separate – with guidelines for planning and implementation	Combined	Separate	Separate – within Environmental Health policy
What is the scope of the policy (urban/rural, comprehensive/poverty focused)?	Comprehensive (urban/rural)	Urban	Comprehensive (urban/rural)	Community-based services	Comprehensive (urban/rural)	Comprehensive (urban/rural)	Comprehensive (urban/rural)	Focuses on rural and informal settlements	Comprehensive (urban/rural)
When was the policy prepared?	1998	1999	1999	2002	1995	1994	2000	2001	2003 (review ongoing 11/03)
Who prepared the policy?	Government department ⁽²⁾	Consultant	Government	Consultant?	Government Department ⁽³⁾	Government department ⁽⁴⁾	Consultant?	Government – National Sanitation Task Team	Government – Ministry of Health
What provision was made for consultation on the policy?	Not clear but probably limited	Discussions with 48 focus groups, govt officials etc.	'Extensive' consultation	Consultative process to produce policy	Not identified	Not identified	Not clear but probably limited	Consultation within the Task Team, involving range of Government Ministries	Not identified
Legal framework (Section 3.3)²									
Are roles and responsibilities clear and appropriately assigned to institutions?								Yes	No
Has the policy been formally adopted? (Question in Guidelines is whether the existing legal framework adequately covers sanitation)	Yes	No	Yes	Approved by deputy minister	Not clear (probably yes)	Yes	No	Yes	No - policy currently in review process (Nov '03)



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Outputs & targets (Section 3.4)									
Does the policy refer to specific outputs and targets? (Note: this and the following four questions are not included in the Guidelines, but have been added as they seem relevant).	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (in a rather general way)	Yes	Objectives are general, but refer to targets of HMGN ⁽⁵⁾	No (targets for water supply clearly stated)	Yes - State President's Office target of basic minimum level to all by 2010	No - objectives and aims are given in general terms
Are targets quantified where appropriate?	No	No	Generally no ⁽⁶⁾	No	Yes (specifically for urban areas)	No	No (except for water supply)	No	No
Are institutional targets included?	Yes	Yes (responsibility for sanitation management)	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Does the policy indicate a time-frame for the achievement of targets?	No	No	No	Refers to 5yr implementation period	Yes (by end of 2000)	No	No	Yes - by 2010	No
Does the policy relate the targets to the existing situation and current problems	No	No (relates more to recent WSP thinking)	No	No (relates more to international agency priorities)	Yes	No	Yes	Yes - states number of h/h without access to sanitation	N/A
Does the policy make specific reference to the needs of rural communities, small towns and poor urban communities?	Rural and urban communities considered separately	Urban groups - which implicitly include poor communities	No	Yes - in so far as focused on small community-based schemes	Not specifically	Identifies need for separate rural/urban plans, etc. Priority to most densely populated urban/semi-urban areas	Yes, especially rural communities	Policy focuses on rural communities and informal settlements. Priority to communities without basic level of service, with greatest health risk	Yes - mentions problems for urban and peri-urban population in the introduction
Does the policy make reference to either programmes or budgets for the targeted groups	No	No	No	Only in a very general way	Yes	No	No	No	Considers funds for schools, health units, refugees, low income h/hs, & geographically difficult areas



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Levels of service (Section 3.5)									
Does the policy define minimum service levels for the targeted population groups	No	No (but reference to technology choices)	No	No	No	No	No	Broadly: hygiene awareness & behaviour, disposal systems, toilet facility per h/h	No
Are these service levels appropriate in the light of existing and planned water supply services	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Health considerations (Section 3.6)									
Did the Ministry of Health play a role in national policy formulation?	No	Not clear but probably not	Minor role at most	No	No	Not identified	Not clear - probably not	Yes, part of Task Team	Yes - lead agency
Is health an explicit concern of the policy?	Yes	Passing reference – main focus on sanitation as economic and social good	No	Yes (but main aims relate to quality of life)	No	Yes - within definition of sanitation, directive and objectives	No	Yes - within definition, problem statement and principles	Health is of primary concern
Does the policy provide information on the types and magnitude of the health problems arising from poor sanitation?	No	No	Types to some extent	No	No	Identifies IMR ⁽²⁾ in the introduction	No	Yes, with incidence of diarrhoea in children <5yrs	Yes
Does the policy address these health problems?	N/A	N/A	To some extent	N/A	No	Yes - in directives and objectives	No	Yes, with hygiene behaviours	Yes - primary aim and vision



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Environmental consideration (Section 3.7)									
Did the Ministry of Environment play a role in national policy formulation?	No	Not clear but probably not	Minor role at most	No	No	Not identified	No	Yes, within Task Team	Not identified
Does the policy make specific reference to the protection of the environment	Yes	Yes, but as with health rather in passing	Yes (but rather in passing)	General references	No	Yes - in the introduction, in the definition of sanitation and the policy statement	No	Yes, in problem statement, definition and principles	Yes - in some detail
Does the policy provide any indication of the magnitude of sanitation-related environmental problems?	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Not specifically - only in general terms
Does the policy address the main environmental problems?	Not explicitly	In a very general and perhaps not realistic way	In a very general way	General reference to raising community environmental awareness	N/A	Reference made to specific problems in legislation - but no details	Not really	Yes, through integrated environment planning, education and adopting a 'polluter pays' approach	Yes, throughout
Financial considerations (Section 3.8)									
Does the policy indicate the cost of meeting sanitation needs (capital, recurrent or both)?	No	No	No	No	No	No. States no programme will be 100% subsidised. Beneficiary contribution according to socio-economic status	No	Both - capital and O&M cost per household (max.) given	No, but identifies percentage of work-time lost due to sanitation-related sickness and injury
Does the policy indicate how those costs might be met?	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Not in detail - independent budget for sanitation from national budget	N/A	Yes - identifies sources of funding: Equitable Share, grants, & revenue	N/A



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Does the strategy for meeting costs include subsidies on capital costs?	Not covered	For zonal and 'city-wide' facilities	Where necessary	N/A	N/A	Yes - but states not 100%	Yes (individual families are solely responsible)	Yes - one-off subsidy per h/h for community development (R600) and infrastructure (R600)	Only for specific conditions - poorest, poor ground conditions, tenants & people in transit
Does the policy assume financial allocations from national government to subsidize recurrent costs for municipal systems?	Not covered	No (explicitly requires that customers bear recurrent costs)	Yes (because sanitation high % of DC expenditure)	No - focus on self reliant local management	Not stated but implied	Not identified	Not covered	Available via the Equitable Share, together with tariffs set for water services	Encourages NGOs/CBOs - on cost-recovery basis
Does the policy refer to the need to fund hygiene education and other programmatic costs?	No	No - appears to assume demand exists	Only for HRD and operational research	No	No	Yes	No	Yes - with R600 subsidy per h/h	Yes
If so, are sources of funding identified and are they likely to be adequate	N/A	N/A	Not explicitly identified	N/A	N/A	Not explicitly - identifies min. 20% of budget to be allocated to software aspects	N/A	Financed by Dept. of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF)	Not identified
Institutional roles and responsibilities (Section 3.9)									
Does the policy define institutional roles relating to planning, financing, regulation, implementation, O&M, M&E and programme support?	Some roles defined but in fairly general terms	Broad division between community and govt responsibilities	Yes (but need to check 'buy-in' by stakeholders)	Only in very general sense that govt is seen as facilitator of community action	No	Yes in general. More details in accompanying Guidelines for Planning and Implementation	In very broad terms - focused more on water supply	Yes - for municipal, provincial and national government, private sector and NGOs	Yes - from h/h to national government, but not in a clearly structured way
Does it provide guidance on correcting any institutional weaknesses?	No	No	Some reference to developing human resources	No	N/A	Some reference to restructuring and co-ordination committee to be formed	No	Through support from private sector & NGOs, co-ordination groups and Sanitation Directorate within DWAF	Yes - with strategies to implement policy - setting up Board, training, co-ordination and communication

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Does it identify a lead agency for co-ordinating sanitation activities?	No	No	Yes - Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD)	No	No	Yes - MoHPP ⁽⁸⁾	No	Yes - DWAF	Yes - Ministry of Health Environmental Health Division with plan to establish Environmental Health Board
General (Section 3.10)									
Does the policy recognize both technical (hardware) and social (software) concerns?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Which of the two predominates? ⁽⁹⁾	Reasonably balanced	Reasonably balanced	Reasonably balanced	Software	Hardware	Software	Hardware	Software	Software
Notes Information relating to the policy context, legislation and other supporting procedures is based only on information found in the policy document itself. (1) Analysis based on executive summary (2) Local Government Division – Ministry of Local Government and Cooperatives (3) National Directorate of Water (4) Environmental Sanitation Section (ESS) of the Department of Water Supply and Sanitation (DWSS), within the Ministry of Housing and Physical Planning (MoHPP) – the lead agency (5) His Majesty's Government of Nepal - targets of "Health for All 2000" and "Basic Minimum Needs" (6) There is a target of 100% sanitation coverage, by either domestic toilets or hygienic public toilets. (7) Infant Mortality Rate (8) Ministry of Housing and Physical Planning (now the Ministry of Physical Planning and Works (MPPW)) (9) This question is not easy to answer. Most policies make considerable reference to software aspects of policy but their intention is to ensure that the hardware is provided. Note that the following issues are not explicitly addressed: Gender, monitoring and evaluation, poverty, water quality monitoring, private sector, promotion and awareness raising, schools and other institutions, aligning policy with other sectors – such as education, women's development, water resources, etc.									

Footnotes

¹ WEDC *Application of Tools to support national sanitation policies* Inception Report for DFID KaR Project R8163 (unpublished), WEDC, 2003.

² Section numbers refer to corresponding sections in the EHP Guidelines.



This Briefing Note presents a comparison of key elements of national sanitation policies, based on a desk-review of the content of nine country policies carried out in 2003.

It is based on the findings of research undertaken in 2003-2005, as part of a DFID-funded research project *Application of tools to support national sanitation policies* (R8163).

Other research outputs include:

- Sanitation Policy: Why it is important and how to make it work – an overview guidance note
- National sanitation policy in Ghana: a case for improved co-ordination? – a briefing note from Ghana
- Implementing national sanitation policy in Nepal: challenges and opportunities – a briefing note from Nepal

Key references

Elledge, M. F., Rosensweig, F. and Warner, D. B. (2002). *Guidelines for the assessment of national sanitation policies* (EHP strategic report no.2), Arlington, USA. Available at http://www.ehproject.org/PDF/Strategic_papers/SRSanPolFinal.pdf (accessed Sept 05).

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