

SESSION REPORT

Asian Civil Society Innovating Change

Water & Sanitation Theme, 19/3/06

**Convenor: Convened by NGO Forum on the Asian Development Bank and FAN
Chair: Hemantha Withanage NGO Forum on ADB, Philippines**

CONVENORS GENERAL REMARKS:

Despite the rhetoric of the National governments, International Financial Institutions and other global bodies, water issues are growing everyday. Yet world leaders and key international institutions cannot find a single voice to address this. The Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of halving the population without access to water by 2015 is becoming unrealistic. The one road approach i.e privatization and private sector participation, full cost recovery and tradable water rights is not the solution for the problem. This approach deprives water to the poor and hinders water for all. **We call upon all governments and the global bodies to accept right to water.**

Yet civil society organization and public sector utilities have proven sustainable models to the urban and rural water and sanitation problems. The experience shared by the local actions presented in this session showed the importance of the **participation & community management, social inclusion, financial sustainability and cost sharing, use of appropriate technology.** These models can be replicated on a large scale.

The sessions make the following recommendations to all the stake holder groups mainly to National Governments. We also make recommendations to the Local communities/ organizations and Financial institutions

LOCAL ACTIONS PRESENTED DURING THE SESSION

Civil society organizations presented sustainable solutions to their urban and rural water and sanitation problems which can be can be replicated on a large scale and demonstrated the importance of the participation & community management, social inclusion, financial sustainability, cost sharing and the use of appropriate technology.

Building dignity through community managed rural water and sanitation in Orissa presented by Joe Madiath of Gram Vikas, India

Community involvement in provision of water and sanitation presented by Nazir Ahmed Watoo of Anjuman Samaji Behbood (ASB), Pakistan

CBO turns into development in the SW coastal region of Bangladesh presented by Mohon Mondal, Gana Unnayan Sangstha (GUS) Bangladesh

Rainwater harvesting in drought affected areas in Sindh presented by Tanveer Arif, Society for Conservation and Protection of Environment (SCOPE), Pakistan

Expert panelists were Ramisetty Murali, Modern Architects of Rural India (MARI), Hun Kim, Director, Social Sectors Division, Asian Development Bank, Reba Paul, Bangladesh Water Partnership and Hilda Coelho, CRSD, India

Recommendations

1. Hundred percent inclusion of the community/geographical areas (hydrological units, administrative boundaries, social cultural commonalities) based approach rather than a restricted socio-economic segment approach is essential in achieving the water and sanitation goals. However this does not mean giving up gender and social equity approaches.
2. Adopting genuine cost sharing/ component sharing is an effective strategy to reduce corruption and mismanagement of resources and it ensures constructive community participation and reduces the overall costs.
3. Multiplicity of the Community based organizations being created through different project interventions (by the National government as well as International Financial institutions) is detrimental to the sustainable development process of the communities. We recommend that financing and facilitating organizations should focus on building conducive atmosphere for coordinated and convergent mode of functioning of existing CBOs rather than creating new water and sanitation committees. The elected local bodies of governance must be fully involved to ensure long term sustainability of the water and sanitation development process.