

CSO COALITION'S RESPONSE TO SACOSAN-IV, COLOMBO DECLARATION

April 11, 2011

FANSA, WaterAid and WSSCC welcome The Colombo Declaration, which outlines ministerial commitments made in the SACOSAN-IV, and are pleased to see that it reflects much of the declaration of the Pre-SACOSAN-IV Consultation Meeting of CSOs. This demonstrates the value of our intensive work up to and during SACOSAN-IV. We hope that the commitments of our Governments in South Asia will generate the required momentum for accelerated progress on sanitation and hygiene.

For more than one year, many members of the above three Coalition partners have been heavily engaged in gathering real peoples' thoughts, hopes and dreams, forming the basis for developing solid evidence-based material in the form of a Peoples' Perceptions report on Sanitation and an accompanying film which gave voice to ordinary people from the region. Both were shared at the CSO pre-meeting and the SACOSAN-IV.

Through wide-ranging consultations, a Traffic Lights Paper was developed which reflects our assessment of progress on previous SACOSAN commitments. WaterAid and WSSCC, together with UNICEF, also prepared a Synthesis on Equity and Inclusion in Sanitation and Hygiene in South Asia, highlighting the current state of marginalization of many population groups but also pointing towards many positive examples and experiences. The two day Pre-SACOSAN-IV community leaders' and CSOs' meeting produced a one page declaration calling for urgent action of governments (<http://bit.ly/embPjR>).

Our serious and systematic engagement was appreciated and recognized by the organizers of SACOSAN-IV. Three thematic sessions and the plenary session on **Grassroots Voices** convened by the coalition provided us with an excellent opportunity to share the problems and solutions from a diverse, well informed perspective.

The key commitments of SACOSAN-IV which reflect the 'asks' from the CSO statement are;

- working towards progressive realization of the Right to Water and Sanitation and to eventually bring it into legislation (*although the coalition had advocated for omitting the term 'eventual' as it weakens the governments' commitments to move on this issue without delay*);
- time bound plans and allocation of resources to deliver on previous SACOSAN commitments;
- delivering context specific equitable and inclusive sanitation and hygiene programmes; and
- developing strong monitoring and accountability mechanisms and adoption of "participation, inclusion and social accountability" mechanisms at all stages of sanitation and hygiene programming, particularly for programmes concerning the marginalized and vulnerable sections of our societies.

The Colombo Declaration is a progressive step forward and good follow-up is essential to ensure that National Governments and all other sector players in the region "walk the talk". We, the Coalition partners, are committed to monitoring commitments and will begin by widely disseminating and informing the people, community leaders, local bodies and other stakeholders about the conference outcome

The Coalition partners came together to bring added strength and solidarity to the campaign to influence the SACOSAN process, particularly to recognize the needs of poor and marginalized people. Through a sustained spirit of collaboration, we have jointly contributed to tangible success. The coalition gratefully acknowledges the valuable support and cooperation extended by **Centre for Environmental Justice (CEJ)**, Colombo and the **SACOSAN-IV Secretariat**, Government of Sri Lanka in facilitating the members' participation at the CSO meeting and at SACOSAN-IV.

To download the [Declaration of the Pre-SACOSAN-IV Consultation Meeting of CSOs](#), [South Asian People's Perspective on Sanitation executive summary](#), [Traffic Lights discussion paper](#) as well as read news and updates as they were captured during the week, visit <http://www.freshwateraction.net/sacosaniv>

