



WATER SUPPLY & SANITATION COLLABORATIVE COUNCIL



Hurry up!
2.6 billion people
want to use the toilet

WSSCC

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WSSCC and SIWI are accepting entries for the 2nd edition of the WASH Media Awards

NEWSLETTER December 2007

News from the Secretariat

WSSCC receives the SULABH Award at the World Toilet Summit

On 31st October 2007 the **Sulabh Global Sanitation Award** was conferred to WSSCC during the World Toilet Summit in New Delhi, rewarding WSSCC's efforts in leading the movement for the inclusion of a sanitation target in the MDGs. This award is a great honour for WSSCC and the ceremony contributed to excellent media coverage of the sanitation topic, which is one of WSSCC's objectives. The World Toilet Summit 2007 was well attended and an example of the networking between sanitation professionals that WSSCC is keen to support.

Launch of the International Year of Sanitation 2008



On 21st November 2007 the UN launched the International Year of Sanitation (IYS) to put the current global crisis at the forefront of the political agenda. The ceremony included statements of high level participants and was well attended by UN Member States, NGOs, citizen groups, academics and the private sector as well as members of the Secretary-General's Advisory Board. The discourses delivered by his Royal Highness the Prince of Orange and Chair of UNSGAB (**read the speech**); UNICEF Executive Director, Ms. Ann Veneman; UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador for education, Ms. Angelique Kidjo; World Bank Director Energy, Transport and Water, Mr. Jamal Saghir and UN Secretary-General Mr. Ban Ki-moon reflected the **five key messages** for the international year: sanitation is vital for human health, it generates economic benefits, contributes to dignity and social development, helps the environment, and, providing a framework for action, sanitation is achievable. Indeed, every \$ 1 spent on improving sanitation generates an average economic benefit of \$ 9! Hence, IYS is a call for collective and effective action.

The need for action was specifically emphasized by the Prince of Orange. He wisely reminded policymakers, opinion leaders and various stakeholders to undertake a supreme effort to make proper sanitation available to *all* people, before highlighting one of the principal truths about the barriers to universal access to sanitation: "I don't think money is the biggest issue. If we take collective action to provide water and sanitation, the money will follow. The problem is largely one of priority and political will".

WSSCC encourages its members and partners to convey the key messages to politicians and decision makers to break down the barriers that deprive 2.6 billion people of the chance to defecate in dignity.

Learn more about the **International Year of Sanitation**.



Secretariat continued

Hurry up! 2.6 billion people want to use the toilet

As part of its ongoing efforts to address the growing sanitation crisis, WSSCC has developed a **new set of WASH advocacy materials**. With the upcoming International Year of Sanitation, a unique platform for awareness and action, WSSCC expects its new materials to be widely used at global and country levels.

QUIZ

1. Compared to a North American citizen, how much does a slum dweller in Nairobi pay for a liter of water?

- A. 3-4 times less B. the same C. 5-7 times more

2. Hand washing with soap can reduce diarrhoea up to

- A. 45% B. 20% C. 60%

3. How many more children die from diarrhoeal diseases than from HIV/AIDS?

- A. the double B. four times more C. 1.3 times more

WSSCC Members & Partners

National WASH Coalitions from India & Nepal meet with WSSCC's Executive Director

Jon Lane met last month with members of the National WASH Coalition in **India** and **Nepal** and was pleased to witness the high level of their activity and commitment to the sanitation cause. These meetings also provided a good occasion for discussing the Coalitions' plans and concerns, as well as encouraging them to integrate the International Year of Sanitation key messages into their daily work.

In Nepal the National WASH Coalition is particularly broad, including colleagues from government, civil society and external support agencies, and attracting the attention of national media and academics. In India, the Coalition comprises mainly NGO colleagues and activists, and engages in a vigorous and constructive dialogue with the government on policy issues. This provides an excellent example of various compositions and emphasis that WASH Coalitions may have in different country contexts.

Building WASH Coalitions in West Africa

In West Africa, WSSCC's member organization CREPA has over the past two years actively supported the development of new National WASH Coalitions in Togo, Benin, Niger and Mali. During a visit to



Carolien Van der Voorden with members from the Burkina Faso WASH Coalition, Ouagadougou

Burkina Faso, Togo, Benin and Niger in September 2007, Carolien Van der Voorden experienced the high level of enthusiasm and commitment exhibited by the new WASH Coalitions and their prospective National Coordinators. While NGOs such as CREPA, Eau Vive, and WaterAid have been instrumental in the early development stages of the Coalitions, it was striking that all three countries also portrayed a high level of government commitment to the WASH Coalitions and campaign, with a variety of Ministries engaged in the coalition meetings. With the WASH campaign in Togo already officially launched by his Excellency the Minister of Water and Hydraulic Resources in September 2007, the other two countries were keen to follow suit as soon as possible.

The Coalitions acknowledged that it will now be key to harness the current

level of enthusiasm. One lesson that has been learnt from previous experience in the region is that the launch of a WASH campaign should not be seen as a goal in itself, but rather as the start of a concerted, long-lasting effort to raise awareness, change behaviour, and improve service delivery. This requires long-term planning from the Coalitions, and a clear structure and division of roles and responsibilities.

Recognizing the difficulties and uncertainty that many new WASH Coalitions experience in developing their initiatives, the WSSCC Secretariat, with the help of some National Coordinators and coalition building experts, is developing a WASH Coalition Building Guidance document. The Guide will be available by the end of the first quarter of 2008.

WSSCC Members & Partners continued

Stephen Turner, WSSCC Steering Committee member, retires from WaterAid after 27 years of service: an Interview

How would you describe your time with WaterAid?

When I joined WaterAid in 1990, the organization only had 15 staff members with an income of about 2.5 million £. At that time we only had one contact number and the telephone rang on everyone's desk! Today, the organization's income is about 37 million £ and the staff has grown to 150 members. My first job was about raising funds from the UK government and the European Union and then I became involved with the shaping and drafting of WaterAid's strategy. In fact I have always been looking at both sides of the work, the UK one and the international programme one. David Collett, the founder Director, set out the ethos of WaterAid, which was about working in partnerships, responding to the needs of the communities who express their focus on water and sanitation, identifying appropriate technologies that were affordable and manageable by them. These principles remain at the heart of our programme work. David Collett was also an important figure in the first years of WSSCC, thinking how the Collaborative Council could grow from just being a group of government and UN agencies to incorporating civil society and non governmental bodies.

What has been the driving force behind your career achievements and where does your passion for water come from?

The recognition of social justice has been the driving force behind my choice of working in international development. In 1970 I decided to go to Nigeria as a volunteer rather than starting a professional career in the UK. I always felt that there are rights that need to be acknowledged and that more privileged individuals and societies have responsibilities in achieving those rights.

Water came later in my career and I am not a specialist in the water sector.

"The fact that water and sanitation issues, being within the top three priorities of many communities in Africa, are not those of national governments and donors remains a scandal. Why don't governments respond to this priority?"

Still, do you think advocacy and communications have contributed to get the WASH issues higher on the political agenda?

I think that supporting communities in improving access to water and sanitation is good in its own right, but it is not sufficient. We really have to ask why people don't get access, and to challenge the barriers that are identified. I became particularly active with WSSCC in the years 1999-2000, when it was developing its "Vision 21", emphasizing that people are at the heart of both demanding their rights and taking responsibility for realizing them. From that point onwards, WSSCC's advocacy activities have grown into the WASH campaign and it has been very encouraging to witness an international organization such as the Collaborative Council taking up the mandate of advocacy for water and sanitation.

What is your vision for the future of the WASH sector?

I would be pleased to see more WASH advocates that don't come from the water sector. WaterAid is currently working with the British Medical Association to get health professionals highlighting the fact that WASH issues are crucial components to any health improvement and disease-decrease agenda. Another vision is a much stronger voice of the people, in addition to professional and technical expertise.



From left to right: Mr. Takele Hunde, National Coordinator, Ethiopia; Mr. Stephen Turner, WaterAid; Ms. Susan Kayetta, National Coordinator, Tanzania; Dakar WASH Forum, 2004

If you look at the HIV/AIDS movement for example, governments took action regarding drug availability and price because people marched in the streets and asked for it, not because drug cartels decided to do so.

What are your plans for the future?

I am going to take a few months off to go to Australia and New Zealand on holiday. Then I am going to think about my next 20 years. I spent 15 or 20 years at VSO and then WaterAid and I hope that I am having another good 15 years to do things I feel really passionate about, even if I don't quite know what those are going to be!

Would you have a message for WSSCC's members and partners?

The WASH campaign has been successful both at the international level in mobilizing high level political support, and at country level in a more operational way by bringing together different actors. In Madagascar for example the UNICEF, the Ministry of Health, local governments, local NGOs and WaterAid are using the WASH umbrella in order to really anchor commitments for water and sanitation in everyone's agenda. Therefore I would say: let's have WASH everywhere and let's expand it from current programmes and countries to many more because it is a fabulous model and a real success of WSSCC!