

FSM 6 ABSTRACT FOR BEATRICE CHIWALA CHIBWE

Theme: **Gender, Equality, and Inclusive Sanitation Service**

Sub-theme 1: **Designing and planning framework and policy for sanitation**

Abstract title: **Designing and planning for inclusive On-site sanitation and Faecal Sludge Management of products and services- A case of Lusaka Water Supply and Sanitation Company**

Abstract Summary

Lusaka Water Supply and Sanitation Company (LWSC) based in Lusaka city, Zambia has recently taken on On-site Sanitation (OSS) and Faecal Sludge Management (FSM) as a new line of business aimed at enabling over seventy percent of the population of Lusaka Province residing in Peri-Urban areas of the city have access to safely managed sanitation services. This paper provides insight into how LWSC is providing more inclusive sanitation services where gender and social inclusion issues/challenges in OSS/FSM are identified and addressed to benefit women, girls and other vulnerable groups such as the aged and people with disabilities.

Key words: gender, social inclusion, on-site sanitation

Introduction

Most households residing in Peri-Urban areas have limited to lack of proper sanitation facilities and services. Such a scenario is even worse for women, girls and people with disabilities who have no choice but to use the poorly constructed sanitation facilities and access services that do not address their unique needs.

LWSC Social Inclusion and Gender Mainstreaming (SIGM) in non-sewered sanitation (NSS) is a critical component toward sustainable implementation and management of OSS/FSM services for the utility. SIGM is the methodology LWSC is utilizing to identify and address gender and social inclusion issues and risks associated with OSS/FSM throughout the sanitation value chain.

Approaches

The Company has embarked on addressing the very root cause of gender, equality and inclusion challenges that manifest in the designing and planning frameworks and policies for sanitation. The goal is to create an enabling environment that is responsive to gender and social needs of beneficiaries. The starting point is the development and revision of key Company policies, processes and procedures to accommodate gender and social inclusion across all divisions and departments. Secondly is to raise awareness through trainings and sensitizations among all staff and community stakeholders aimed at building capacity to identify and deal with any gender and social inclusion issues in their various areas of jurisdiction. Finally is the review of job descriptions for key employees to reflect gender and social inclusion key performance indicators. Accompanying the stated roadmap is research to generate information that would assist staff in making informed decisions critical to gender and social inclusion mainstreaming in OSS/FSM service provision.

Results

So far, LWSC has reviewed the Institutional Social and Gender Policy with its accompanying five-year (2018 to 2022) implementation strategy; and monitoring and evaluation framework to guide gender and social inclusion mainstreaming across all Company operations. The Company has also trained 275 key employees (among them Directors, Managers and some front line staff) who have undergone intensive SIGM training. Conversely, LWSC has conducted SIGM sensitizations across all departments reaching out to 500 employees. Similarly, 500 community stakeholders drawn from various project target areas have been trained to assist LWSC mainstream gender and social issues at household level. Currently, LWSC is reviewing key job descriptions across the organization to include gender and social related duties and responsibilities. The Company has also started the process of reviewing key policies, processes and procedures across all divisions to accommodate gender and social inclusion guidelines. Key among policies to be reviewed is the recruitment and employment policy aimed at achieving gender parity. LWSC has also made commitment that all sanitation projects are participatory/more inclusive. For example, the current OSS toilets constructed for households with disabled and elderly members have ramps and rails to enable easy access. The toilets also have a toilet seat for easy use especially by pregnant women and elderly people. The Company also continue to monitor all third parties engaged by it to undertake any construction or consultancy work to abide by no gender discrimination principles.

Discussions

The lessons learnt are that gender stereotypes still pose a greater challenge in improving OSS/FSM services at household level. Despite the institution having good policies in place, improved access to sanitation/FSM services remain a gender and power issue. The one who has power and resources (mostly the man) at household level still determine when to invest in sanitation. Though lack of access to improved sanitation mostly affect women, girls and people with disabilities, they do not have the power and resources to influence decisions at household level. Therefore, an integrated approach that speaks not only to policies at institutional level but also empower women, girls and people with disabilities with resources such as income, education and land tenure to enable them have a voice to change their current status.

To sum up, giving beneficiaries a voice in OSS/FSM ensures that the toilet facilities constructed and FSM services provided meet the unique needs of individual household members and creates a sense of ownership that is critical to sustainability of such services. Figure 1 and 2 below shows the household sanitation facilities that LWSC is currently constructing with a focus on inclusion for all.



Figure 1: Toilet with ramp and rail for the disabled



Figure 2: Toilet with a raised seat to accommodate the elderly

References

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