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Breaking new grounds to accelerate access to water and sanitation for all in Africa

Challenges and solutions for the eradication of sanitation backlogs in the policy context of Free Basic Sanitation

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INTRODUCTION



- South Africa is a progressive country in terms of water and sanitation policy
- During the apartheid era, there was no dedicated institution dealing with water and sanitation services – but homeland governments
- In 1994 up to 50% of South Africans lacked access to sanitation
- Recognizing access to sanitation as a human right, the post apartheid government instituted the reconstruction development program (RDP)
 - ✓ The RDP gave the DWAF responsibility of ensuring universal access to water and sanitation
 - ✓ Subsequently, the White Paper on water and sanitation was released in 1994

LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR SANITATION IN SOUTH AFRICA



- Constitution (1996)
- White Paper on Water Supply and Sanitation Policy (1994)
- National Sanitation Policy (1996)
- Water Services Act (1997)
- Housing Act (1997)
- Municipal Systems Act (2000)
- White Paper on Basic Household Sanitation (2001)
- Strategic Framework for Water Services (2003)
- National Sanitation Strategy (2005)
- Free Basic Sanitation Implementation Strategy (2009)
- National Sanitation Policy (2016)

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE PROVISION OF SANITATION SERVICES IN SOUTH AFRICA (1)



- ❑ The provision of sanitation in South Africa is guided and regulated by three of these policy documents:
 - ✓ the **White Paper on Water Supply and Sanitation** (DWAF, 1994)
 - ✓ the **National Sanitation Policy** (DWAF, 1996)
 - ✓ the **White Paper on Basic Household Sanitation** (DWAF, 2001)

- ❑ These policies were supplemented by the **Free Basic Sanitation** (FBSan) implementation strategy (DWAF, 2008)
- ❑ The implementation of these policies has resulted in reducing sanitation backlogs from 52% in 1994 to 21% in 2010 (DPME, DWA & DHS, 2012)
- ❑ By 2017, the backlogs were further reduced to 17.2% (StatsSA, 2018)

- ❑ Basic sanitation is defined as ‘the prescribed minimum standards of services necessary for the safe, hygienic and adequate collection, removal, disposal or purification of human excreta, domestic waste water and sewage from households, including informal households’ (Water Services Act of 1997).

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE PROVISION OF SANITATION SERVICES IN SOUTH AFRICA (2)

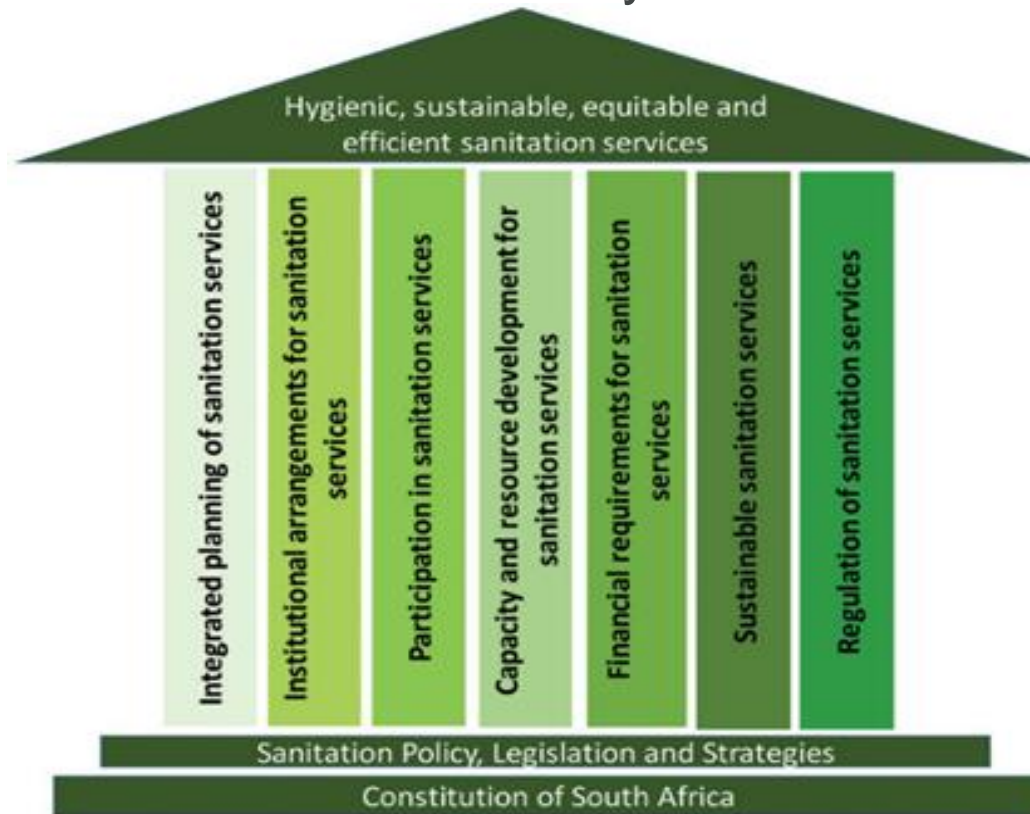


- ❑ Due to various discrepancies (mainly related to rural and informal settlements) observed in these regulations, a National Sanitation Strategy (SAHRC, 2018) was published.
 - ✓ The National Sanitation Strategy was intended to support the provision of basic services to informal settlements
- ❑ Due to persisting challenges, the FBSan implementation strategy which was published
 - ✓ This policy prescribes the right of poor households to access sanitation
 - ✓ Qualified households are entitled to free sanitation services...

SANITATION POLICY (2016)



- All these changes did not bring expected results thus leading to the publication of a new Sanitation Policy in 2016



- ✓ However, challenges for implementing the FBSan policy are still persisting (6)

CHALLENGES FOR IMPLEMENTING FBSAN



- ❑ Despite advances made in addressing sanitation backlogs since 1994,
 - ✓ 79% of South Africans in urban areas have access to basic sanitation (WHO & UNICEF, 2019)
 - ✓ significant percentage of the population (in informal and rural settlements) still lack access to improved sanitation facilities
- ❑ There are also significant backlogs in basic sanitation provision
 - ✓ 11% households lack services (DPME, DWA & DHS, 2012)
 - ✓ 26% are at risk of failures and experience breakdowns (DPME, DWA & DHS, 2012)
- ❑ Inequalities in relation to access to water and sanitation continue to persist.



CHALLENGES FOR IMPLEMENTING FBSAN



- ❑ **Challenges have been viewed from various perspectives**
 - ✓ Institutional: institutions involved and their roles
 - ✓ Spatial: density of settlements to be served
 - ✓ Economic: cost of interventions
 - ✓ Social: end-users' participation and behaviors
 - ✓ Political: role of politicians
 - ✓ Informational: knowledge and understanding of end-user needs

CHALLENGES FOR IMPLEMENTING FBSAN



- ❑ **Challenges experienced are being attributed to:**
 - ✓ Lack of clarity of the policy
 - ✓ Inadequate institutional arrangements
 - ✓ Lack of functional coherence, governance and management deficits, capacity and skills shortage
 - ✓ Top-down supply driven and target driven approach to deliver services
 - ✓ Political interference
 - ✓ Difficult settlement conditions
- ❑ Collectively, all these challenges significantly undermine the implementation of the FBSan policy and jeopardise the eradication of sanitation backlogs.

METHODS



- ❑ **Documentary reviews:** municipal documents and previous studies
- ❑ **Interviews**
 - ✓ Department officials (as policy-makers)
 - ✓ Municipal officials (as implementing agent)
 - ✓ Informal settlement residents (as end –users and beneficiary of services)
 - ✓ Civic and Non-governmental organizations (as support agent)
 - ✓ Residents and representatives of their lobby groups
- ❑ **Focus group discussions**
 - ✓ Water and Sanitation department officials (two)
 - ✓ Municipal officials (three)
 - ✓ Civic and Non-governmental organisations (five)
 - ✓ Community leaders (five) and resident lobby group representatives (three)
 - ✓ Advocacy groups (five)
 - ✓ Researchers (three)
 - ✓ Entrepreneurs (three)

RESULTS (1)



❑ Challenges associated with the provision of FBSan

➤ Interpretation of FBSan policy

- ✓ Subjective clauses of the policy that are read and interpreted differently
- ✓ Disconnection between policy and implementation in practice (e.g. lack of norms and standards related to types of facilities, context of their deployment, selection of beneficiaries etc.)

➤ Institutional arrangements

- ✓ Lack of coordination amongst institutions involved
- ✓ Lack of enforcement mechanisms

➤ End-users perceptions and expectations

- ✓ Disjuncture between what people believe and aspire to what is possible in providing services

➤ Political marketing and interference

- ✓ Can accelerate the provision of services
- ✓ Has aggravated end-users' perceptions and expectations: leading to violent protests

RESULTS (2)



❑ Challenges associated with the provision of FBSan

- Lack of skills, competencies and knowledge
 - ✓ Skills shortage
 - ✓ Political appointments take precedence over skills and experience
- Internal tensions between community and their elected leaders
 - ✓ Disagreement on several issues (e.g. level of service)
 - ✓ Change in leadership
 - ✓ Favoritism
- Challenging conditions of the settlement
 - ✓ Status and nature of the land
 - ✓ General conditions of the settlement

This infers that implementing the FBSan may not be possible if these challenges are not addressed

RESULTS (3)



□ Solutions to address FBSan implementation challenges

| Challenges associated with FBSan policies | Proposed solutions |
|--|--|
| <p>Interpretation of the policies</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification and clarification of sections of the policy (addendums) • Propagation of the policy across communities • Training of community leaders and influential individuals |
| <p>Disconnection between the policy and its application in practice</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of sanitation delivery monitoring team • Development of policy implementation's evaluation criteria • Verification and compliance monitoring of the implementation process |
| <p>Lack of norms and standards to determine service levels, facility types and beneficiaries</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop service level norms and standards • Develop norms and standards to distinguish genuine beneficiaries • Disseminate norms and standards to stakeholders and beneficiaries |
| <p>Consumers' perceptions and expectations</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissemination of the sanitation policy • Develop compendium of available solutions and their context of application and dissemination of information prior to deployment of services • Develop interaction mechanisms to liaise with consumers |

RESULTS (4)



□ Solutions address FBSan implementation challenges

| Challenges associated with FBSan policies | Proposed solutions |
|---|--|
| Political marketing and interference | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depoliticise the sanitation service provision • Decision to deploy services to be made by technocrats • Briefing of politicians about sanitation services and solutions |
| Ineffective institutional arrangements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of institutions involved • Develop /assign of roles and responsibilities • Develop monitoring and performance criteria • Develop and implement accountability mechanisms |
| Latitude given to municipalities to decide on several aspects of sanitation provision | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforce the requirements for involving other institutions and consumers • Develop stakeholders' concertation mechanism for decision making • Implement accountability measures and systems |
| Lack of skills, competencies and knowledge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement skills and experience appointments process (banish political appointments) • Training of sanitation implementing agents • Regular training, skills audit and performance appraisal to be implemented |

RESULTS (5)



□ Solutions address FBSan implementation challenges

| Challenges associated with FBSan policies | Proposed solutions |
|---|---|
| Lack of enforcement and accountability mechanisms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop enforcement and accountability measures • Monitoring of the enforcement and accountability measures • Development of measures and actions to address non-compliance |
| Internal tension and conflict between the community and their elected leaders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop mediation mechanisms to ease tension • NGOs/CSOs/CBOs to play facilitator and mediation roles • Implementation of regular community forums and dialogue |
| Challenging settlement conditions and patterns, status of the land | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a compendium of informal settlement types and conditions – and applicable services to the context • The compendium to be disseminated by municipal facilitators and civic organisations • Develop alternative solutions for unsuitable or difficult settlements |
| Sustainability of sanitation services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a compendium of sustainable sanitation solutions • Disseminate information about sustainable sanitation solutions • Conduct awareness with regard to cost of FBSan facilities |

RESULTS (6)



□ Solutions to address FBSan implementation challenges

- The proposed solutions emphasise the need to clarify certain clauses of the FBSan policy
- Improved collaboration between institutions and capacity building for those involved in the FBSan policy implementation and service provision
- The success of the FBSan policy relies on
 - ✓ the existence of a capable policy championing,
 - ✓ good governance,
 - ✓ providing mechanisms for improved coordination across institutions
 - ✓ meaningful engagement of consumers

CONCLUSION (1)



- ❑ FBSan policy has been recognised as a progressive policy aimed at ensuring access to sanitation for all
- ❑ However, there is disconnection between the policy and its application in practices
- ❑ Translating the FBSan policy into action remains contentious
- ❑ End-users perceptions and expectation remain a major barrier
- ❑ This disconnection has created a divide between municipalities and end-users
- ❑ Municipalities are facing challenges to address disjuncture between what end-users believe and aspire and what is possible

CONCLUSION (2)



- ❑ Addressing challenges associated with the eradication of sanitation backlogs needs to be grounded in
 - ✓ Clarification of the FBSan policy
 - ✓ A deep understanding of end-users needs, practice and settlement conditions
 - ✓ Meaningful end-users participation at critical stages of decision-making process
 - ✓ Implementation of monitoring, enforcement and accountability mechanisms

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