



SUSTAINING GOVERNMENTS EFFORTS INVESTMENTS IN WASH

Odisha has made major strides to provide drinking water and sanitation to its rural population under national and state programmes. But several challenges remain to meet SDG Goal 6 by 2030. The State Government and WASH sector organizations have held two workshops to discuss what policies and programmes need to be prioritised to achieve this goal.

The objectives were:

- Focus on activities and investments in areas that need attention, going beyond infrastructure.
- Facilitate an on-going dialogue among the WASH sector organizations and the government.
- Identify areas where such reflections are needed at the state and/or district levels, in terms of geography and theme.

METHODOLOGY



KEY MESSAGES

- Ensure long-term planning for a demand-led approach.
- Support the official 'foot-soldiers of WASH' with a community cadre.
- Integrate climate change mitigation into WASH and ensure adequate technical and financial support.
- Set up a learning and knowledge exchange forum to share experiences across the state and between the government and CSOs.
- Engage beneficiaries in the planning and implementation of WASH projects.

FINDINGS

ODISHA STATE LEVEL

Table 1: Summary of responses from government participants

REGION	NORTHERN DISTRICTS			SOUTHERN DISTRICTS			WESTERN DISTRICTS			COASTAL DISTRICTS		
	Wat	San	Hyg	Wat	San	Hyg	Wat	San	Hyg	Wat	San	Hyg
Policy, legislation & monitoring	4	2.9		3	3		3.9	3.9	2	3.6	3.6	1
Institutions, planning & finance	2.9	3.2		3.8	3.6		3.6	3.6		2.6	2.6	1
Infrastructure & services	3	4		4.3	3		4	4		3.75	3	1
Water resource management & climate change	1.2	2.0		4.2	3.2		3.3	3.3		1.4	1	1

Table 2: Summary of Responses from development partners

REGION	WATERAID			UNICEF			GRAM VIKAS		
	Wat	San	Hyg	Wat	San	Hyg	Wat	San	Hyg
Policy, legislation & monitoring	3	3	1	3	3	0	3	3	
Institutions, planning & finance	2	2	1	2.5	2		2.9	3.6	3.2
Infrastructure & services	3	2.7	1	4	2.3	0	3.3	3.6	
Water resource management & climate change	2	2	1	0.8	0.7	0.5	2.4	2.5	
Learning & adaptation	1	1	1	2	1.5	0.3	2.9	3.1	

Note: The blank cells were not scored.

POLICY, LEGISLATION, AND MONITORING

- In Odisha, policies, legislation, and monitoring systems are in place for water and sanitation services. However, there are none for hygiene.
- There is a budget available for water and sanitation services, however, allocations for long-term maintenance of capital - required to keep services sustainable are not specified.
- There are measures for data collection and validation; however, they are neither standardized nor synchronized across all districts, in terms of periodicity and frequency, to enable cross-learning on best practices across the districts

INSTITUTIONS, PLANNING, AND FINANCE

- There are institutions, plans prepared, and clear-cut budgets allocated for water and sanitation services. However, there are no specific institutions for hygiene services, and similarly, there is no planning or clear budget line for hygiene services.
- There are skilled human resources (such as Swacchagrahis) available to strengthen the delivery of water and sanitation services, however, they are not being utilized optimally.
- Community engagement in the preparation of annual plans and implementation of the same needs to be strengthened for the plans to be reflective of community needs and foster ownership.
- In addition, plans that reflect a long-term perspective are required to keep the WASH services sustainable.
- There is not adequate funding available for operation and maintenance.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

- There are gaps in maintaining the water and sanitation asset inventory, which affects maintenance and thereby the service - for the purpose of planning and maintenance.
- There are bottlenecks in the process of procuring assets.
- While progress has been made in the delivery of WASH services, there still remain gaps in reaching the last mile—those living in remote areas and minorities otherwise.

WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

- Climate change is intrinsically related to WASH, yet it is not factored into the planning and implementation of water and sanitation programmes.
- Communities have limited awareness of the impact of climate change on WASH, consequently, their plans are prepared without taking climate change into account.
- The local water management institutions do not exist or are not functional across the districts; consequently, water resource management is not integrated into WASH planning and implementation.

LEARNING AND ADAPTATION

- There are some government channels that enable the exchange of information on water and sanitation. However, there are no functional and institutionalized channels for communities to share, learn from each other, and adapt their best practices.
- While disaggregated data is available, it is not used effectively for planning, decision-making, or troubleshooting. Further, communities are not engaged in data validation.

RECOMMENDATIONS WAY FORWARD

Policy, legislation, and monitoring

- WASH policies and programmes need to mitigate the impacts of climate change through suitable programmes, finance, and capacity.
- Communities should be involved in data collection for monitoring as well as data validation for transparency and to foster ownership, thus contributing to the sustainability of the services.
- The frequency and intervals of data collection across districts, including data on WASH infrastructure and practices, should be standardized to facilitate exchange and cross-learning.
- A robust and credible complaint redressal mechanism needs to be established to ensure the sustainability of services.

Institutions, planning, and finance

- Training programmes, to be effective, should be offered after assessing the capacities and needs of the people at the different levels involved in the provision of WASH services.
- Training backed by long-term handholding support is needed for community bodies such as the Village Water and Sanitation Committees to carry out their mandates.
- There is a need to mobilize community members to contribute towards maintenance (time and financial resources) to foster ownership and sustainability of community resources and community participation in breakdown, complaint registration, etc.

- Adequately skilled staff should be employed at different levels of the WASH institutions so that services last beyond the missions. The unutilized skilled cadre of community 'foot soldiers' should be utilized.
- Training community members, especially women and youth, from local institutions as WASH preneurs can have a positive impact on the sustainability of the services as well as the economy of the region.

Infrastructure and services

- Community members should be involved in project execution and oversight so as to ensure transparency and sustainability of the services.
- Regular behaviour change campaigns and engagement of users are needed to ensure appropriate use and maintenance of infrastructure and to demand better services (including retrofitting of toilets).
- Infrastructure design should incorporate the needs of people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.
- WASH services to remote areas and to the marginalized should be ensured.

Water resource management and climate change

- Water source sustainability and security should form part of the planning and implementation of WASH programmes.
- There is a need to build the capacities of all those engaged in the provision of WASH services, from community members, Gram Panchayat leaders, to officials, on practical steps to address climate change in the planning and implementation of WASH programmes.

Learning and adaptation

- Learning and idea-exchange are required for an open and frank sharing where information beyond numbers is exchanged. A functioning cross-sectoral platform of WASH service providers, authorities, development partners and agencies, and community representatives should be established to connect and share experiences from the field on a regular basis, across the state to discuss the various WASH components. (We may call it the State WASH Forum.)

A CASE FOR HAND HYGIENE

There is lack of a comprehensive policy or strategy at the state level to promote the adoption of hand hygiene.

There is no nodal department to lead hand hygiene initiatives. There is, additionally, lack of capacity to understand the significance of hygiene and accordingly plan, budget, and implement strategies for hygiene promotion, from the grassroot level to the state level.

There is very limited data on hygiene available (*for instance, tap water supply in schools for handwashing*). Thus, there needs to be a comprehensive policy or strategy for hand hygiene, addressing infrastructure needs along with behavioural requirements.

There needs to be designated department to spearhead hand hygiene initiatives. At the same time, convergence of different departments is required to leverage hand hygiene initiatives.

Capacity building initiatives are required for all, from the grassroots to the department level to understand the importance, and accordingly plan, budget and implement initiatives.

Further, **a comprehensive mechanism is required to monitor hand hygiene, including functionality of infrastructure as well as practice.**

