



13th SuSanA Meeting Kigali Group Photo

## Sanitation experts brainstorm in Kigali, Rwanda

By The SuSanA Secretariat Team

The 13th meeting of the Sustainable Sanitation Alliance (SuSanA) was held at the Kigali Institute of Science and Technology (KIST) in Kigali, Rwanda, from 17 – 18 July 2011, prior to the Third Africa Conference on Sanitation and Hygiene (AfricaSan3) that ran from 19-21 July 2011. It was jointly hosted by the Ministry of Health (Rwanda), UNICEF-Rwanda and the SuSanA secretariat, GIZ and had about 107 participants.

It was the third SuSanA meeting in Africa after Durban, South Africa in 2008 and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in 2009. Participants were drawn from governments across Africa, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the private sector, community based

organizations, universities, students and volunteers from Africa but also from other countries across the world. Jack Sim from the World Toilet Organization in Singapore and Kamal Kar from CLTS Foundation were two famous non-African experts who shared their knowledge on sanitation issues.

The Sustainable Sanitation Alliance is a network of currently 157 partner organizations and came into existence in early 2007 to promote sanitation systems that take into consideration all aspects of sustainability, ranging from health and hygiene, environmental and natural resources, technology and operation, to finance and economics, as well as socio-cultural and institutional aspects.



Dr. Elisabeth von Münch, GIZ Germany



Patrick Onyango, GIZ Kenya



Jack Sim, Founder, World Toilet Organization, Singapore





SuSanA views itself as a coordinating and working platform that serves as a sounding board for ideas on sustainable sanitation and as a catalyst for action. The partners in the SuSanA network aim to improve sanitation and overall health by contributing to the pool of available knowledge on sustainable sanitation. The overall goal of the SuSanA is to contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by promoting sanitation systems which take into consideration all aspects of sustainability.

SuSanA has eleven thematic working groups which cover a variety of different sanitation aspects and provide deliverables that underline the problems and opportunities of these aspects in factsheets, presentations and publications of working groups. At the present time, the secretariat function of SuSanA is carried out by the German organization “Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH”, in close collaboration with the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI).

On the first day of the meeting, four working groups met in parallel sessions and offered a platform for participants to reflect on past activities and discuss the way forward. The second day was dedicated to a full plenary meeting that allowed newcomers and existing members to get an overview about SuSanA, its working groups and strategic direction.

Notable among presentations by Working Group 1 on Capacity Development was how SuSanA can work with the media to give more visibility to sanitation issues; and also the sustainable sanitation and water management (SSWM) Toolbox ([www.sswm.info](http://www.sswm.info)). Furthermore, this working

group launched the new SuSanA discussion forum and encouraged all to interact online ([www.forum.susana.org](http://www.forum.susana.org)).

Working Group 2 on Costs and Economics of Sustainable Sanitation discussed the financing of sanitation in low-income areas and what is needed for a successful, economical implementation. Moreover, lessons from urban sanitation in Zambia were presented. The main conclusion was that there is a need for innovative financing models, for example revolving micro-credit schemes, for financing institutions involved in sanitation.

Working Group 3 on Renewable Energies and Climate Change had a presentation on biogas sanitation systems based on the case of Rwanda. It was observed that Rwanda promotes biogas sanitation in combination with animal manure and kitchen waste at both household and institutional levels – for example at boarding schools.

Working Group 4 on Sanitation Systems, Technology Options, Hygiene and Health had a presentation on “Microbial Exposure and Health Assessments in Sanitation Systems and Technologies”, and one updating on several sanitation and urine reuse projects in eThekweni, South Africa. It was pointed out that in populations with high levels of HIV/AIDS, high levels of drug residues in urine might negatively affect the fertilizer quality of urine (to be researched further). It was also reported that risk assessment tools for a wide range of sanitation technologies will soon be ready for use as a decision tool for planners and decision makers.

Working Group 5 on Food Security and Productive Sanitation Systems



*Chris Buckley, University of Kwazulu Natal, South Africa*



*Rosaita Ngina, Water Services Trust Fund Kenya*



*Aart van den Benkel, Safisana, Netherlands*



*Kettie Harava, Water for People Malawi; Julia Kent, Water for People Uganda; Sharon Roose, Plan Netherlands*



*Nelson Ekane, Stockholm Environment Institute SEI, Sweden*



*Andreas Holtkotte, Julia Ziegenbein & Alexander Grieb, Ifw Germany*





presented papers on the safety of use of EcoSan latrine products by communities, drawing on a case study of the Burea District of Rwanda; the role ecological sanitation can play in increasing agricultural production, based on experiences from Zimbabwe; business approaches for improved sanitation, based on Ghana's experiences in the production of organic fertilizers and energy from sanitation sources; agriculture as a driver for sanitation, based on experiences in Burkina Faso; and faecal pathogen contamination of wastewater irrigated farm produce vis-à-vis the rain fed based on a study by Egerton University, Kenya. It was observed that there was still wide practice of unsafe reuse of faeces from EcoSan toilets, brought about by a general lack of knowledge on safe and affordable faecal sludge management strategies. However, it was reported that there are numerous practical guidelines to farmers on urine use available, the challenge being dissemination. Use of the WHO "multi - barrier" approach was recommended to minimize risk (see WHO Reuse Guidelines from 2006).

Working Group 6 on Sustainable Sanitation for Cities and Planning made presentations on financing sanitation for the urban poor, based on experiences in Kenya, and on initiatives for reaching the sanitation MDG based on experiences from Burkina Faso. The main conclusions were that there is a need to promote the right planning approach in the right contexts; to promote pro-poor funding through institutions to specifically target plot level and household sanitation in low-income slum areas; and to seek a demand-based approach, through sensitization

and awareness raising among rural populations.

Working Group 7 on Community, Rural and School Sanitation presented case studies on menstrual hygiene management in Zimbabwe; sustainable school sanitation in Rwanda; and experiences from the School WASH campaign in Tanzania. During this session, the main observations were that school hygiene clubs have a key role in hygiene promotion and technology adoption; that the private sector has an important role in the operation and maintenance of school sanitation; and that menstrual hygiene management requires much more awareness raising amongst girls, parents and teachers but also boys. Research with regard to making menstrual hygiene management tools (e.g. sanitary pads) more affordable is urgently required (e.g. the question needs to be answered if menstrual cups made of silicon could be a viable solution).

Working Group 8 on Sustainable Sanitation in Emergency and Reconstruction Situations had a presentation on uni-sex waterless urinals based on the Kenyan experience. These urinals had proven beneficial for people with disabilities and could be used for emergency situations as well. Three key technologies to fill critical gaps in the immediate phase of emergencies as regards to sanitation have been identified: raised toilets when digging down is not an option; improved desludging options; and sludge treatment and disposal kits.

During the Working Group 9 (Public Awareness and Sanitation as a Business) session, a presentation entitled "World Toilet Day – Getting



Waltraud Keipp & Moussa Drabo, BOATA, Mali



Brenda Achiro, Netwas Uganda and Andreas Kanzler, GIZ



Josephine Ouédraogo, DG, AEUE, Ministry of Agriculture and Hydraulics, Burkina Faso



Laura Kovalchick, Georgia Institute of Tech Atlanta Georgia & Alexandra Hutteringer, Emory University Atlanta Georgia, USA



Evelynne Wairimob, World Youth Parliament, Kenya



Susan Dundon and Tesbome Lemma, Millenium Water Alliance, USA/Ethiopia





Everyone Involved in Sanitation” was held. Three main components were identified to be beneficial for sanitation promotion: the use of humor; making people jealous (possibly even stronger than shaming), and advertising of sanitation products.

One observation from Working Group 10, on Operation and Maintenance of Sustainable Sanitation, was that there was a need to look at the operation and maintenance of the entire sanitation system when planning.

Working Group 11, on Groundwater Protection, made a presentation on groundwater protection in fighting cholera, based on experiences from Lusaka, Zambia. The observation was that there are high concentrations of nitrogen in groundwater around unplanned settlements in urban areas, and that there is a need to promote more suitable options with less leaching of faecal contaminated water and seepage from pits into the aquifers.

A panel debate with Rwandan experts from different sectors (infrastructure, health, environment) was also held during this meeting. Main outcomes of this debate were that there is a need to give marketing skills to those working with sanitation at the grassroots so that they can promote their skills and products better; and that there needs to be more coordination of government ministries for sustainable sanitation. Ministries of Water, Education, Health, Environment, Infrastructure etc. need to coordinate their activities to realize progress in sanitation, for instance by setting common hygiene standards.

The meeting was closed with a plenary discussion of SuSanA’s present performance and future projections.

Emphasized was the need for more skilled marketing and advocacy experts to spearhead SuSanA’s strategy of linking decision makers with the technical content generated by the working groups, as well as the need for more entrepreneurs to tap into the huge business potential in sanitation. Challenges identified for SuSanA were the need to develop additional avenues of sharing information apart from the internet, which SuSanA has relied on primarily, as well as avenues of linking to governments at all levels.

Among the strengths noted was that SuSanA continues to offer opportunities for professionals to meet, update and share information on improving sanitation. However the main challenge remains on members to shape the future of the Alliance and to decide on the role of the secretariat. The two days were quite busy and intense and had a very friendly, relaxed atmosphere – as is typical of all SuSanA meetings. The variety of backgrounds and experiences of the participants was impressive.

For more information about this 13th meeting (all presentations, photos, videos, minutes) and about SuSanA see: <http://susana.org/meetings/july-2011-kigali-no-13> or [www.susana.org](http://www.susana.org). You can also interact with SuSanA members on facebook: [www.facebook.com/susana.org](http://www.facebook.com/susana.org), join the SuSanA forum ([www.forum.susana.org](http://www.forum.susana.org)), or E-mail the secretariat at [info@susana.org](mailto:info@susana.org)



Samuel Gonga, Devolution Trust Fund, Zambia



Annie Kanyemba, Aquamor, Zimbabwe



Christian Rieck, GIZ Germany



Dorothee Spuhler, seecon gmbh, Switzerland



Emery Sindani, SuSan Design, Kenya