

**POLICY GUIDELINES ON
EXCRETA AND SEWAGE
MANAGEMENT**

DEVELOPED BY

**FEDERAL MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT
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PREFACE

Insanitary methods of Excreta and Sewage Management (collection, treatment, disposal and after disposal care) by majority of the population had exacerbated problems of the spread of faeco-orally transmitted and other sanitation related diseases. Government's efforts at addressing poor Excreta and Sewage Management have been piece-meal and uncoordinated with poor regulatory measures. This situation has spanned over a century from pre-independence period to the present time.

The 1986 National Policy on Health recognises insanitary excreta and sewage disposal as a cause of environmentally induced health problems while the 1989 National Policy on Environment seeks the improvement of environmental health services and conditions relating to water supply, sewage, excreta etc. Nonetheless, the lack of a specific National Policy on Environmental Sanitation and in particular Policy Guidelines on Excreta and Sewage Management, has been a major gap and significant constraint towards efficient service delivery in this critical sector.

Within the framework of the National Environmental Sanitation Policy, the present Policy Guidelines has been developed with appropriate strategies to "roll back" the poor sanitation problems and preventable diseases attributable to poor Excreta and Sewage Management. The purpose of this Policy Guidelines is therefore, to ensure countrywide access to efficient and sustainable sanitary Excreta and Sewage Management methods and obviate associated public health hazards.

In this regard, the Policy Guidelines have taken cognisance of Excreta Sewage Management Options, Collection Equipment, Private Sector participation as well as, Enforcement Mechanisms and Sanctions. This Policy Guidelines is therefore critical in the implementation of appropriate programmes on the Excreta and Sewage Management component of the National Environmental Sanitation Action Plan.

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Honourable Minister of Environment

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Human faeces frequently contain a wide range of disease-causing organisms including viruses, bacteria, and eggs or larvae of human parasites. Many of these organisms are transmissible to people through houseflies, contaminated hands, food, water, eating and cooking utensils, and by direct contact with contaminated objects. Infections such as diarrhoea, cholera, typhoid, etc. that account for significant morbidity and mortality in developing countries such as ours, are spread in this way. Some others, for example, hookworm and whip worm are transmitted through contact with soil contaminated with faeces and may spread very rapidly where open defaecation is common and people walk barefoot. Hookworm and whipworm contribute significantly to the occurrence of malnutrition and anaemia and thereby render people more susceptible to other diseases. In areas where intestinal schistosomiasis is endemic, contamination of water bodies by human faeces is the main route of spread of this disease.

1.2 Although urine is relatively harmless, in areas where urinary schistosomiasis is endemic, transmission of this disease is through contamination of fresh water bodies with urine of infected persons. Incidentally, urinary schistosomiasis is endemic in many communities in Nigeria.

1.3 Access to basic sanitary facilities is particularly poor. It has been observed that, in urban centres, some households with water carriage system, pipe the raw sewage into the public drains. According to the 1999 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS), 12% of the urban population has no toilet facilities of any kind whilst, 55% use pit latrines and 31% use flush toilets. Rural areas are even less served. The 1999 NDHS also indicated that about one third of rural households have no toilet facilities at all and as a result make use of bushes and rivers. Open defecation is a common practice in the rural areas. In the periurban centres, children as well as adults defaecate indiscriminately at dumpsites, gutters or any available open space in the late hours of the night and early hours of the morning.

1.4 These figures are especially sobering as they imply that a large number of people urinate and defaecate in open spaces, with serious health implications in densely populated urban and periurban settlements.

1.5 This Policy Guidelines provides general guidance to ensure that every family has access to a suitable sanitary method of excreta/sewage management.

Nonetheless, what is considered suitable will vary markedly depending more on the location and to a lesser extent on the socio-economic status of families.

2.0 **AIM**

To ensure countrywide access to efficient and sustainable Excreta and Sewage Management methods and obviate associated public health hazards.

3.0 **OBJECTIVES**

- 3.1 To create awareness on the effects of insanitary Excreta and Sewage Management on the quality of the environment and public health.
- 3.2 To promote the adoption, construction, use and maintenance of culturally acceptable sanitary Excreta and Sewage Management systems.
- 3.3 To ensure safe and nuisance-free management of excreta and sewage during collection, transportation, treatment and final disposal, in a manner that protects public health.
- 3.4 To promote environmental aesthetics.
- 3.5 To prevent the contamination of environmental media (soil, water, food, etc.).
- 3.6 To promote the adaptation of the by-products of sewage treatment to productive purposes.

4.0 **JUSTIFICATION**

- 4.1 In Nigeria, it is not uncommon to see people urinate and defecate in open spaces and into public drains with impunity. Such actions contribute to environmental degradation and pollution.
- 4.2 Insanitary Excreta and Sewage Management as well as deficiencies in other components of Environmental Sanitation, contribute significantly to the continuing high rate of infant and child mortality from diarrhoeal diseases and also play a major role in vector borne diseases.
- 4.3 Ensuring countrywide access to sanitary Excreta and Sewage Management methods will result in a lowered incidence of Environmental Sanitation related diseases and free precious funds used in health care costs for other developmental activities.

5.0 **STRATEGIES**

- 5.1 Develop Policy Guidelines for sustainable Excreta and Sewage Management in line with National Development Objectives.
- 5.2 Promote countrywide adoption of the Policy Guidelines on Excreta and Sewage Management.
- 5.3 Undertake research, develop and promote culturally acceptable and affordable Excreta and Sewage Management technology options
- 5.4 Facilitate the construction and maintenance of adequate sanitary facilities in public places including the high ways.
- 5.5 Establish mechanisms for sanctioning insanitary management of excreta and sewage.
- 5.6 Promote Stakeholders participation in Excreta and Sewage Management.
- 5.7 Foster and promote private sector participation in the maintenance and operation of Excreta and Sewage Management facilities and services.

6.0 **INSTITUTIONAL ROLES**

6.1 **The Federal Government shall:**

- 6.1.1 Develop, periodically review and update the Policy Guidelines on Excreta and Sewage Management.
- 6.1.2 Source for funds for programme development, specialized studies and capacity building on Excreta and Sewage Management.
- 6.1.3 Support research into culturally acceptable and affordable Excreta and Sewage Management technologies.
- 6.1.4 Build capacity of, and provide technical support for, States and LGAs in effective Excreta and Sewage Management.
- 6.1.5 Encourage incentives for compliance with the provisions of the Policy Guidelines.
- 6.1.6 Support sensitization and awareness programmes.

6.2 The State Governments shall:

- 6.2.1 Ensure the implementation of the Policy Guidelines on Excreta and Sewage Management.
- 6.2.2 Provide technical support to the LGAs through training and manpower development programmes for capacity building and institutional strengthening.
- 6.2.3 Support the provision of logistics including financial instruments to facilitate private sector participation.
- 6.2.4 Review and update relevant State legislations to create enabling environment for effective private sector participation in Excreta and Sewage Management.
- 6.2.5 Conduct public education and enlightenment on Excreta and Sewage Management.
- 6.2.6 Encourage private sector participation in Excreta and Sewage Management.
- 6.2.7 Provide adequate and functional sewage dislodgement facilities.

6.3 The Local Governments shall:

- 6.3.1 Collaborate with all Stakeholders in the provision of sanitary Excreta and Sewage Management.
- 6.3.2 Enact Bye-laws and establish sanctions and enforcement mechanisms.
- 6.3.3 Define and enforce appropriate standards for Excreta and Sewage Management.
- 6.3.4 Sensitize and mobilize the community members for effective participation in the programme.
- 6.3.5 Undertake routine inspection and regular monitoring of facilities
- 6.3.6 Build capacity of community artisans in the construction of culturally acceptable and affordable excreta management facilities.
- 6.3.7 Ensure provision of hygienic sanitary conveniences at large public assemblies and this shall be mandatory as a prerequisite for granting approval

6.4 The Private Sector shall:

- 6.4.1 Comply with the provisions of the National Policy Guidelines on Excreta and Sewage Management.

- 6.4.2 Participate effectively in Excreta and Sewage Management on cost recovery basis.
- 6.4.3 Design appropriate cost effective and affordable technology for improved service delivery.
- 6.4.4 Engage in partnership with LGA for better service delivery.
- 6.4.5 Support research into Excreta and Sewage Management.
- 6.4.6 Promote public enlightenment campaign.

6.5 Civil Society Organizations shall:

- 6.5.1 Undertake grassroots mobilization to support appropriate sanitary Excreta and Sewage Management systems.
- 6.5.2 Promote the adoption, construction, use and maintenance of culturally acceptable sanitary Excreta and Sewage Management systems.
- 6.5.3 Promote public enlightenment campaigns on appropriate strategies for excreta and sewage collection, transportation, treatment and disposal.

6.6 The Public shall:

- 6.6.1 Comply with the provisions of the National Policy Guidelines.
- 6.6.2 Adopt environment friendly habits and practices.
- 6.6.3 Pay requisite fees for services.
- 6.6.4 Cooperate with other Stakeholders to ensure a sustainable Excreta and Sewage Management systems.

7.0 **GUIDELINES FOR EFFICIENT EXCRETA AND SEWAGE MANAGEMENT SERVICE DELIVERY AT THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL**

The strategies adopted for Excreta and Sewage Management at Local Government level shall relate to the culture, land use types, economic base, climatic conditions, level of urbanization and the existing institutional arrangement. Nevertheless, the following guidelines are provided as a broad statement to make for strategic intervention in Excreta and Sewage Management at the LGA.

7.1 EXCRETA DISPOSAL

- 7.1.1 Every house shall have suitable and adequate numbers of sanitary latrines/toilets. This shall be built of hygienic easy to clean materials, accessible and designed to minimize the proliferation/harbourage of disease vectors.

- 7.1.2 The latrine/toilet shall provide adequate privacy for users.
- 7.1.3 The latrine/toilet shall be located to avoid potential contamination of water sources and surface soil.
- 7.1.4 There shall be no handling of fresh faeces.
- 7.1.5 The following minimum number of latrines/toilets to the number of persons indicated below shall be accepted as ideal:-

1	-	10 persons	1 toilet
11	-	20 persons	2 toilets
21	-	40 persons	3 toilets
50	-	75 persons	4 toilets
75	-	100 persons	5 toilets

Over 100 persons, one toilet to every additional 30 persons.

7.2 EXCRETA MANAGEMENT

The Local Government shall:

- 7.2.1 Classify all settlements according to their level of urbanization, size, function and economic base into urban, semi-urban and rural.
- 7.2.2 Review existing methods of Excreta and Sewage Management. Where existing methods are sanitary and acceptable, they shall be promoted. Where the methods are insanitary or inappropriate, the LGA shall enforce the provision and use of acceptable methods by house owners.
- 7.2.3 In general, States and LGAs shall promote methods that take into account differences in residential districts as indicated in the table below:

Residential Area	Collection Method
Rural - sparsely populated areas	Ventilated Improved pit latrines (VIPs)
Well laid out modern cities with Central Sewage System	Connect to the Central Sewage System
All other areas*	Water Closet with septic tank and soak away pit, Aqua Privy, Pour-flush and Decentralized Sewage System where applicable

**Cognizance has been taken of the peculiar problems of riverine communities where excreta is disposed in water bodies. While it is intended that specific guidelines to address this issue will be provided in future review of this Policy Guidelines; to ensure privacy and human dignity, affected communities shall provide appropriate structures at designated areas for defecation purposes.*

- 7.2.4 Set up an efficient system for detecting and abating nuisance, sanctioning defaulters and enforcing the law through Sanitary Inspection of Premises.
- 7.2.5 Monitor, evaluate and re-plan management strategies at regular intervals

7.3 COLLECTION EQUIPMENT

The emptying of septic tanks by local authorities or private operators shall be carried out with appropriate equipment that conforms with the provisions in the National Policy Guidelines on Sanitation Equipment.

7.4 SEWAGE/SLUDGE MANAGEMENT

- 7.4.1 Every State/LGA shall, as a matter of urgency, discourage the indiscriminate dumping of sewage sludge on land and in water bodies. Therefore, the private sector shall be encouraged to undertake the construction, privatisation and commercialisation of sewage treatment plants at every LGA for use by all companies involved in sewage management.
- 7.4.2 Recycling of sludge arising from sewage treatment shall be encouraged as much as possible.
- 7.4.3 For cottage industries, provision shall be made for onsite management of sewage sludge in an environmentally sound manner.
- 7.4.4 The Environmental Sanitation Authorities of the LGA shall inspect and license all dislodging vehicles operating in the LGA. Such a license shall be renewed annually.
- 7.4.5 Environmental Sanitation Authorities in collaboration with other relevant agencies shall designate areas where sewage sludge and other matter dislodged by these vehicles shall be emptied.
- 7.4.6 It shall be illegal to empty sludge in any area not designated for such a purpose and any dislodger who fails to use such a facility shall be prosecuted and appropriate sanctions imposed.

7.5 EXCRETA AND SEWAGE/SLUDGE MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

- 7.5.1 Three (3) management options are recommended:

- i. By Local Government/ Municipal Authorities;

Direct operations of sewage management by Local Government/Municipal Agencies may be embarked upon where the private initiative is low. This practice is often bedeviled with frequent personnel turnover and the use of

incompetent or untrained officials. Although money may be saved, it may be at the expense of satisfactory performance.

ii. By Private Companies on contract with Municipality;

Contracting out sewage management to private contractors by Local Government/Municipal Agencies has its advantages. First, sewage treatment is conducted as a business venture without political considerations. Similarly, the burden of expenditure for equipment and capital outlay is placed on private companies whose management is often effective. However, it is often counter-productive, as profit is the object of service. This problem can be overcome by effective monitoring and sanctioning system by the LGA, to ensure compliance with standards.

iii. Private Companies on contract with Home Owners.

8.0 **PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION**

Private sector participation shall be hinged on the principle of fair-play and transparency that is devoid of political undertones. The selection of private sector participants in Excreta and Sewage Management shall be organised as follows:

- 8.1 Franchised area shall be planned and mapped.
- 8.2 Criteria for company qualification and selection shall be clearly stated.
- 8.3 Indicators for franchised performance shall be specified.
- 8.4 Terms of Reference and Conditions of Engagement of the private sector participants shall be defined.
- 8.5 Monitoring and evaluation procedure shall be outlined.
- 8.6 Entire operations shall be backed by legislation.

9.0 **SANCTIONS AND ENFORCEMENT MECHANISMS**

Mobile Sanitation Courts have become necessary to encourage public compliance with set rules and regulations, enforce standards and ensure positive attitudinal changes. In this regard, the following are recommended:

- 9.1 Laws/Bye-laws on excreta management, which stipulate recommended methods of management for different areas, and the citizens' obligations shall be enacted.

- 9.2 The Laws/Bye-laws shall be adequately disseminated to the communities.
- 9.3 Local and mobile courts shall be established where they do not exist, to try offenders and impose sanctions.
- 9.4 Sanctions shall be strictly enforced.