

**NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION  
ACTION PLAN**

**DEVELOPED BY**

**FEDERAL MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT  
ABUJA**

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## PREFACE

A National Policy on Environmental Sanitation is not only expedient but compelling for Nigeria to ensure judicious management of her abundant and diverse resources and foster good health and wellbeing of the teeming population. The current democratic dispensation is therefore, geared towards ensuring improved Environmental Sanitation standards in line with contemporary, political and economic realities as enunciated in the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) document. The policy is also in compliance with set international obligations and commitments as contained in the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) targets and the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) initiatives. This is aimed at increasing National Productivity and foster Economic Development through improved Environmental Sanitation practices.

Environmental Sanitation has remained consistently poor in Nigeria. Wastes management services are inefficient as about 87% of Nigerians use disposal methods that are adjudged as insanitary. Access to basic sanitary facilities is generally poor. Studies have shown that in urban areas, 12% of the population has no toilet facilities of any kind, 55% use pit latrines while 31% use flush toilets (NDHS, 1999). Rural areas are even less served as open defecation and urination are common practices. The state of food in homes, markets and abattoirs is equally appalling and unwholesome. Food meant for human consumption is often exposed to dust, flies, bacteria, viruses and other micro organisms. This may probably account for the occurrence of about 600, 000 episodes of diarrhea in children under the age of five annually with increasing cases of food and

water borne diseases such as cholera, food poisoning and typhoid/para-typhoid fevers (FMOH, 2003).

Slum/shanties have emerged in city fringes where water and sanitation problems are more acute resulting in increase burden within the population. The standard of school sanitation is equally poor. Vector-borne diseases such as Malaria, Onchocerciasis (River Blindness), Schistosomiasis, Yellow Fever and Trypanosomiasis constitute major health problems in Nigeria. Up to 50% of crops especially grains, cereals, vegetables, fruits and livestock are destroyed annually before and after harvest by agricultural pests. All these account for remarkable economic losses contributing to the prevalence of poverty and underdevelopment.

Several efforts made at improving the state of the Nigerian environment had been diverse and varied. These include Legislative initiatives, creation of relevant Agencies and evolution of policy instruments. Federal Government's intervention in environmental management include the establishment of the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA) by Decree 58 of 1988, the National Policy on Environment of 1989 as well as the creation of the Federal Ministry of Environment in 1999. Most States of the Federation have enacted laws which established Waste and Environmental Sanitation Authorities/Boards and Environmental Protection Agencies while Local Governments have passed Bye-laws and regulations on various aspects of environmental management.

However, past efforts have been piecemeal, ad-hoc and uncoordinated. The failure of past efforts could be attributed mainly to poor Environmental Sanitation education and awareness, low literacy levels, non-responsive governance over the years, indiscipline and disregard for the rule of law.

Absence of a clear-cut policy on Environmental Sanitation is responsible for overlap of functions at different levels of Government, inappropriate institutional arrangement, adoption of ineffective methods, non-inclusion of all Stakeholders and low private sector participation. Poor sanctions and enforcement mechanisms all make existing Legislative instruments ineffectual.

The National Environmental Sanitation Policy and Guidelines are therefore, prepared as a holistic and multi-sectoral approach to achieve the following:

- i) Attitudinal rebirth to review socio-cultural practices and behavioural patterns of the Nigerian populace;
- ii) Total involvement of all Stakeholders in system management;
- iii) Promotion of increased private sector participation in service delivery for sustainable Environmental Sanitation management;
- iv) Creation of efficient institutional and legal framework for Environmental Sanitation;
- v) Evolving affordable and appropriate technological initiatives for efficient service delivery and systems management and
- vi) Evolution of sustainable funding mechanisms for sound Environmental Sanitation.

The National Environmental Sanitation Policy has identified the factors in the immediate human environment that affect water, soil, and air and proffered certain remedial and control actions that must be taken in order to restore the ecosystem to its natural state of purity. The areas that should be addressed include:

- i) Municipal solid waste management,

- ii) Medical waste management,
- iii) Excreta and sewage management,
- iv) Food sanitation,
- v) Sanitary inspection of premises,
- vi) Market and abattoir sanitation,
- vii) Adequate potable water supply,
- viii) School sanitation,
- ix) Pest and vector control,
- x) Management of urban drainage,
- xi) Control of reared and stray animals,
- xii) Disposal of the dead (man and animals),
- xiii) Hygiene education and promotion,

All the components of the National Environmental Sanitation Policy need to be translated into actions for the policy goals to be met. Consequently a well articulated National Action Plan was developed with the active participation of various Stakeholders.

The National Action Plan mirrors the operational arrangements for the realization of the lofty aim and strategic objectives of the National Environmental Sanitation Policy and Guidelines. It is presented in eight chapters as follows:

- Chapter I        Set Procedures for Policy Implementation
- Chapter II      Develop Administrative and Legal Framework
- Chapter III     Develop Human Resources

Chapter IV	Set Criteria for Partnership and Stakeholders Participation
Chapter V	Promote Socio-cultural and Behavioural Changes
Chapter VI	Set Criteria for Nuisance Detection and Abatement in Habitation and Other Premises
Chapter VII	Evolve Sustainable Funding Mechanisms
Chapter VIII	Monitoring and Evaluation.

Roles and responsibilities of actors are defined while expected results of major activities and tasks are stated in measurable terms. The Action Plan also contains specific indicators to monitor and evaluate the major activities during implementation and at the end, so as to ensure that the stated objectives are realized.

It is expected that the policy shall be subject to review every four years. However, the schedule of activities are currently defined in a short term of 2 year period to ensure that the policy gains momentum and matures within the life of the current administration being the initiator of the effort. The Activity Schedule is described as follows:

Immediate Action - 0 to 3 months : These are activities towards the successful take off of the programme. Short/Medium Term - 3 to 24 months : These are activities which follow immediately after the launch of the programme and also ongoing through the life span of the Action Plan.

In the development of the National Environmental Sanitation Action Plan, certain assumptions have been taken into consideration. These include:

- i) Government's unalloyed political commitment demonstrated by the creation of the Federal Ministry of Environment will be sustained
- ii) Availability of funds and its timely release
- iii) External Support Agencies are to assist in line with NESAP and with sectors identified
- iv) Stakeholders commitment to programme implementation
- v) State refer to Agencies responsible for Environmental Sanitation at State level
- vi) LGA refer to Local Government Sanitation Authority

The Federal Government shall be totally committed to the implementation of this well articulated National Environmental Sanitation Action Plan and shall encourage full support and participation of other tiers of Government and all Stakeholders. This is the only way we can together achieve the desired impact of assuring improved Environmental Sanitation Standards and consequently a good quality of life, improved productivity and poverty reduction.

Col. Bala Mande (rtd.)  
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