SEPTAGE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS AS APPROPRIATE SANITATION INTERVENTION TO ADDRESS PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERNS IN URBAN AREAS IN THE PHILIPPINES

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**SITUATION**
- In the Philippines, significant gains made in water supply provision may have been negated with inadequate sanitation/wastewater infrastructure
- Septic Tanks are the dominant means of treatment of household wastewater
- Majority of these STs have not been properly constructed and are inadequately maintained so much so that they have become ineffective in reducing contamination
- Inadequately treated Septic Tank effluents find their way into the drainage system – comes into contact with population when it rains and floods, which are normal events in the country
- Groundwater resources have also been impacted with the seepage of contaminated water from the STs

**INTERVENTION**
A Typical Septage Management Program consists of:
- Information and Educational Campaign; awareness raising
- Improvement/Reconstruction of HH Septic Tanks according to standards
- Enabling Ordinances; financing arrangements/fund sourcing; site acquisition/allocation, tapping the private sector; revenue generation mechanisms
- Viable Institutional arrangement and collaboration among the Local Government Units and Water Districts/Utilities; Memoranda of Agreement; PPP arrangements
- Periodic Desludging of STs; Proper transport and handling of desludged material; Treatment of septage to appropriate discharge effluent standards

**SATISFACTION**
Septage Management Programs are seen as mid to long term interventions to bring about significant decrease in contamination due to Household wastewater discharged, thereby improving quality of receiving waters – ultimately leading to improved public health!

Ref.: USAID, AICOM Inc.: A Rapid Assessment of Septage Management in Asia: Policies and Practices in India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam