Governance and Transparency Fund programme

Getting started with governance

01

FAN Freshwater Action Network Global

WaterAid

UKaid from the British people

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"Without 'good' or at least 'good enough' governance the fight against poverty cannot be won."[1]

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1 DFID (2007) *Governance, development, and democratic politics: DFID's work in building more effective states*, pp 14-21. DFID, London. Available at: webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http:/www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/governance.pdf or www.gsdrc.org/go/display&type=Document&id=2964&source=rss

Introduction

This handbook explores the processes and challenges involved in creating strong community-based organisations (CBOs) that are able to engage in governance advocacy. Based on the experiences of the WaterAid/Freshwater Action Network (FAN) Governance and Transparency Fund (GTF) programme, it raises questions and identifies lessons emerging from this process, as well as providing practical suggestions regarding tools and methods that can be used.

This handbook focuses on:

- **Why good governance is important.**
- **Mobilising and motivating communities.**
- **Capacity building for local groups.**
- **Notes on the limitations of community-based approaches.**

The primary audience for this handbook is non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and networks working on governance issues, including water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) governance. However, a wider range of stakeholders interested in issues of accountability, transparency, participation and responsiveness in the relations between governments and citizens should find this handbook of interest.

This handbook is number **one** in a series of five learning handbooks produced by the WaterAid/FAN GTF programme. All are available at:
www.wateraid.org/gtflearninghandbooks

About the WaterAid/FAN Governance and Transparency Fund programme

Working with 33 partners in 16 countries, the GTF programme has combined bottom up, demand-led approaches at community level with supporting advocacy at national level to achieve its goal to: 'improve the accountability and responsiveness of duty-bearers to ensure equitable and sustainable water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services for the poorest and most marginalised.'

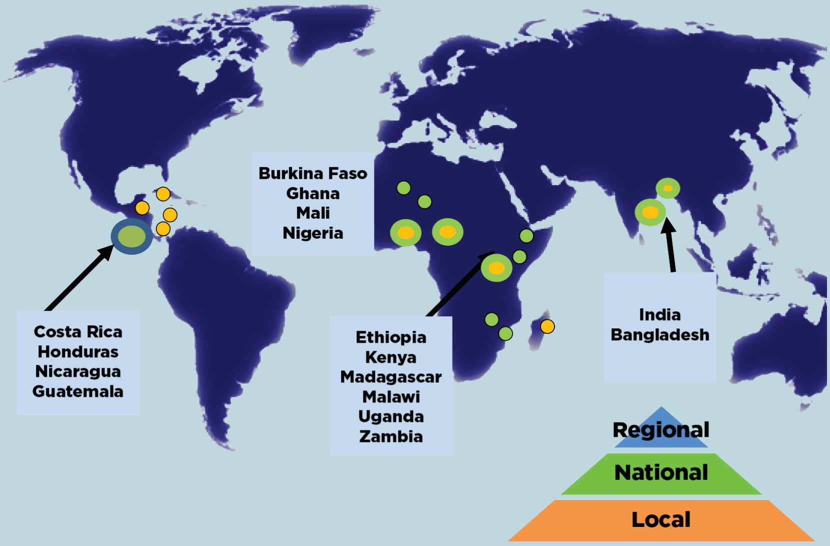
The programme, which is funded by the UK Government's Department for International Development (DFID) through its Governance and Transparency Fund, began work in 2008. This phase of work on governance will end in September 2013.

Programme map showing countries and levels of operation

The programme's approach, which is rooted in DFID's Capability, Accountability and Responsiveness (CAR) framework[2], can be summarised as:

- Empowerment through awareness raising on rights, plus capacity building in skills, tools and analysis.
- Alliance building through networks and multi-stakeholder forums.
- Advocacy to influence governments for more and better WASH services and for more transparency, accountability, participation, consultation and responsiveness.

The aim is to create CBOs with the confidence, skills and tools to hold governments to account, supported by strong NGOs and networks able to engage with decision-making processes and influence the design and implementation of WASH policies at all levels.



2 Ibid

1. What is governance?

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) sees governance as the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels:

'Governance comprises the complex mechanisms, processes and institutions, through which citizens and their groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences[3].'

The UNDP adds that the actors involved in governance are not only governmental but also include civil society and the private sector.

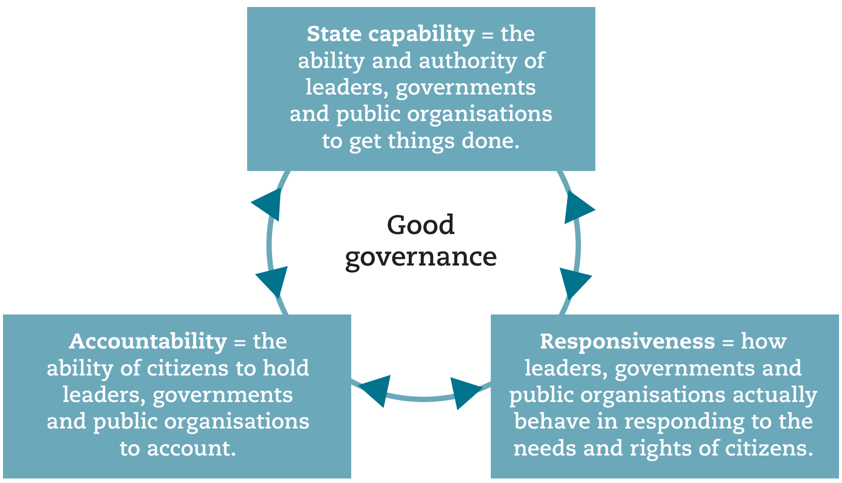
For DFID, governance encompasses **'all the mechanisms, processes, relationships and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests and exercise their rights and obligations[4].'**

DFID's Capability, Accountability and Responsiveness (CAR) framework[5] (see Figure 1) states that good governance can be assessed in terms of how well a state is doing in terms of the following criteria:

- **Capability:** leaders and governments are able to get things done and provide stability, regulation, growth and security.
- **Accountability:** citizens are able to scrutinise the government and public institutions and hold them to account to ensure that their rights are honoured, the rule of law is applied and that there is a free media and elections.
- **Responsiveness:** government policies and institutions include pro-poor policies that promote equity, respond to the needs of all citizens, uphold rights, provide access to government services and ensure that government is free from corruption and its practices are well-regulated.

WASH sector governance involves all the decisions, processes and relationships governing WASH services and all stakeholders who have an interest in those services. This includes government, private sector and civil society actors.

Figure 1: DFID's CAR framework



Source: DFID (2007) *Governance, development, and democratic politics: DFID's work in building more effective states*

3 UNDP (2001) *Good governance and sustainable human development: A UNDP policy document*. UNDP, New York. Available at: http://mirror.undp.org/magnet/policy/chapter1.htm
4 DFID (2007) *Governance, development, and democratic politics: DFID's work in building more effective states*
5 Ibid

1.1 Characteristics of good governance

Good governance in the WASH sector is influenced by the overall characteristics of governance specific to each country. Politics, laws, style of government, constitution, policies, economy, customs and traditions will all be involved in shaping the quality of a country's governance. This means that strategies for achieving better governance need to be adapted for different countries. There is no single model that will fit every situation[6].

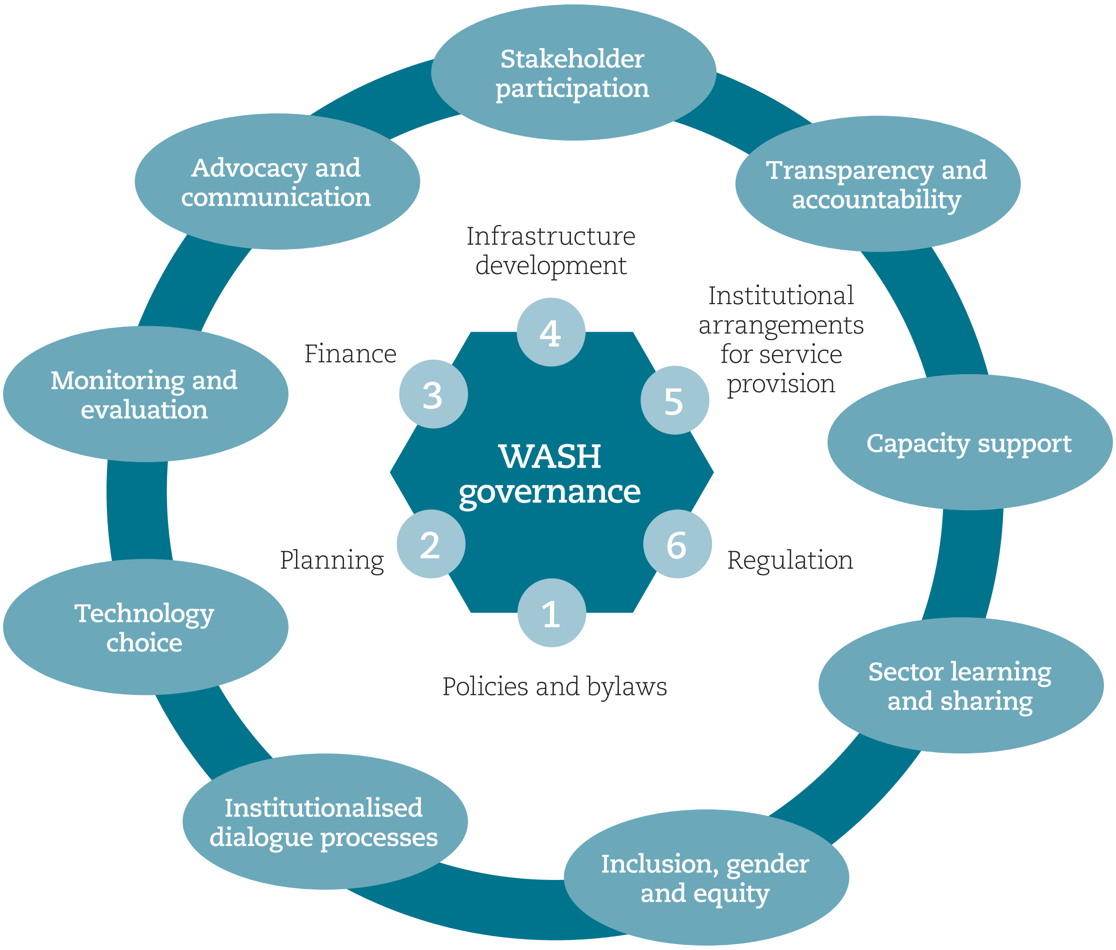
According to the International Resource Centre for Water and Sanitation, 'good governance emerges when stakeholders engage and participate with each other in an inclusive, transparent and accountable manner to accomplish better services, free of corruption and abuse, and within the rule of law[7].'

At local levels, good governance is dependent on, among other factors:

- The context set by national policies, programmes and budgets.
- Overall government attitudes towards its citizens.
- The willingness and capacity of local officials to implement national policies and programmes.
- How open local officials are to engaging with local communities and responding to their ideas and recommendations.
- Whether local government is convinced about the benefits of increased transparency and accountability.

6 A useful introduction to governance focusing on WASH can be found in a PowerPoint presentation by IRC (International Water and Sanitation Centre): www.slideshare.net/ircuser/module-3-wash-goverance-presentation
7 de la Harpe J (undated) *Strengthening local governance for improved water and sanitation services*.IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre, Netherlands. Available at: www.irc.nl/page/38638

Figure 2: Characteristics of good governance



Source: IRC presentation

1.2 Why good governance is important

All citizens would prefer to be led by a government that delivers stability, peace, and economic security alongside justice, fairness and civil freedoms. When it comes to matters that directly affect their lives, such as WASH services, people want to have a say in how, when and what is delivered and how much it will cost.

WaterAid's *Getting to boiling point* report[8] showed that WASH systems and governance institutions are weak in many developing countries. It concluded that the main hurdle to achieving universal access to WASH was weak accountability among those responsible for planning, policy-making, investment and delivery of WASH services, ie government, service providers and other sector agencies. The report also showed that these problems were not due to a lack of technical ability or expertise but rather a lack of political will[9].

8 Redhouse D (2005) *Getting to boiling point: turning up the heat on water and sanitation*. WaterAid. London, UK
9 For more on the importance of sustainable good governance or building political will see handbook five, *Sustainability in WASH governance programmes*. Available at: www.wateraid.org/gtflearninghandbooks

WASH sector governance is always influenced by politics and power. As a consequence, decisions about how and where services are delivered are influenced by a number of factors other than evidence or according to greatest need. Indeed, whether a particular region or community can access WASH services may depend less on need, or even current policies, than on whether the governing party or a local politician sees them as a priority in terms of votes or whether local officials see them as a means to further their careers, a source of additional income or, more practically, located within relatively easy reach of their office. As a result, whole areas are repeatedly ignored when programmes are rolled out and funding is allocated.

Unless affected communities are able to demand their entitlements from local politicians and government officials, the likelihood is that these political realities will not change.

1.3 The importance of community organisations in improving governance

As outlined in this series of handbooks[10], improving governance requires both action at national level and upward pressure from grassroots groups and communities.

However, long-term, sustainable progress towards better governance cannot be dependent on local NGOs being present forever. This means that while NGOs play a key role as catalysts and capacity builders, the key actors driving change must be local citizens and CBOs that are able to operate with only minimal external support.

Furthermore, because CBOs are embedded in the communities they serve they 'are well-suited to assess and respond to local needs on a long-term basis, contributing to community services, development, and rights-based work[11].'

WaterAid/FAN GTF programme local-level partners were all committed to building strong communities and CBOs that would be empowered to advocate greater accountability and responsiveness from government and other powerful local stakeholders.

Lessons

It is important that all staff in NGOs and international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) working on governance participate in capacity building exercises that develop and deepen their understanding of, and commitment to, good governance because:

- Working on governance has implications for internal NGO structures, systems and behaviours which may need to change in order to provide a good model for others.
- Motivating communities requires not only confidence in the subject but also genuine enthusiasm for it.
- As citizens, all staff should be ambassadors for good governance and carry its principles into how they interact with government and fellow citizens as individuals.

10 Handbook five, *Sustainability in WASH programmes*, available at: www.wateraid.org/gtflearninghandbooks
11 Yachkaschi S (2008) Towards the development of an appropriate organizational development approach for optimising the capacity building of community-based organisations (CBOs): A case of three CBOs in the Western Cape. PhD thesis, University of Stellenbosch, South Africa

2. Mobilising and motivating communities

2.1 The what and why of community mobilisation

Community mobilisation is the process of bringing together members of a community to:

- Discuss relevant development issues they are facing.
- Raise awareness of the underlying causes, effects and potential solutions to these issues.
- Identify the methods, tools and resources (both internal and external) they could use to overcome their difficulties.

Community mobilisation has many benefits. It gives the opportunity to reflect on experiences and learn from them; allows community members to express their priorities, which can improve the performance of the programme; and encourages community members to participate actively in the programme.

At the same time, the process of mobilisation also enables NGO partners to learn about community dynamics and respond to the specific needs and experiences of each community.

A wide variety of methods were used by GTF partners to begin the mobilisation process. Across Africa these included:

- Home visits
- School and health centre visits
- Sports and cultural events
- Joint activities with local government, or local politicians
- Competitions – song, poetry, drawing, etc
- Village-level meetings with video or film showings

Lessons

- Working with small groups is most effective. Those involved then take the message to their friends and neighbours.
- Awareness raising in firmly established and trusted institutions like schools and clinics gives added credibility. It is also a good way to reach women and children.
- If it is possible to involve local officials or politicians, this has the benefit of drawing them into future activities at an early stage. The downside is that, if these stakeholders are not trusted, they may put communities off.
- For big events like sports meetings, always give the messages at the start of the event – by the end people may have already left for home.

2.2 The challenges of mobilising communities

2.2.1 Persuading very poor and marginalised people that they can engineer change

The difficulties of mobilising communities and building CBOs often go unreported[12]. Yet the challenges are real, and particularly severe when working with poor and marginalised people and when working with a rights-based approach that means the NGO workers are not offering direct material rewards (wells, seeds, buildings, etc) for participating in the project.

12 One reason for this is that NGOs feel that writing about problems and complications will reflect badly on them in the eyes of their donors, who often seem more interested in hearing about concrete successes.

GTF partners note that, at the first meeting, many marginalised communities appear to be resigned to the fact that the outside world will treat them with contempt, ignore them at best and exploit them at worst. This is not a matter of apathy. Often it simply reflects a community's repeated experience of powerlessness from past attempts to change its situation.

Furthermore, anyone who repeatedly experiences negative feedback and damaging behaviour from others eventually will come to adopt the negative stereotypes they are presented with. Indeed, from the perspective of a marginalised individual or community facing constant discrimination, an acceptance of their inferiority and inherent faults can seem to be the only rational explanation for why outsiders would treat them so badly[13].

Many GTF partners deliberately chose to work with poor and marginalised communities living in remote or hard-to-reach areas. Members of these communities lacked education, had limited exposure to wider society and often came from groups that were looked down on, or actively discriminated against, and had been neglected by government.

In these circumstances, taking community members from a state of feeling powerless to one where they are ready to engage with government and challenge the status quo takes skill and determination from NGOs and courage from the community members themselves.

13 See also paragraph on 'invisible power' in Section 1.2 of handbook two, *Power analysis tools for WASH governance*. Available at: www.wateraid.org/gtflearninghandbooks

Case study: Bribes and threats – the realities of challenging the powerful

Jharkhand state, India, is home to many different minority tribal groups, who often live in remote areas and below the poverty line. These groups have been the main focus for the governance programme of GTF partner SATHEE (Society for Advancement of Tribes, Health, Education and Environment).

The Government of India's Department of Rural Water Supply has a database that shows what has been delivered to which place as part of its water and sanitation programme. Their website (www.ddws.gov.in) said that Amarpur panchayat, in Godda district where SATHEE was working, had 636 toilets. The SATHEE team and the local villagers could identify only 10-12 toilets, none of which were functional.

The Amarpur Water and Sanitation Committee was shocked by the huge difference between the Government's figures and the reality. It seemed clear that this was an example of a much wider problem – widespread corruption in the district. The Gram Sabha (official people's forum) and the committee complained at district level and requested that the missing toilets be installed. Shortly afterwards, district officials visited the village and tried, unsuccessfully, to bribe the community leaders to keep quiet.

The Gram Sabha then filed a Right to Information request, but the answers given by the District Information Officer were vague and unsatisfactory. A village-level official tried to bribe the person who filed the Right to Information request to keep him quiet. When that did not work, some local contractors and government officials came to the village and made threats of violence against the community.

Soon afterwards, the villagers decided to call a Gram Panchayat-level meeting. Again, some outsiders came to the meeting and threatened SATHEE's staff and the committee members, but the Gram Panchayat members protected them.

The next step was for a small group of villagers to visit the district-level Development Commissioner, described by SATHEE as 'an honest, strict person', to initiate an official process to assess the 'real' situation.

The community waited for the findings of this investigation before taking any further action but again they were not given a satisfactory explanation of what had taken place or told what action would be taken.

Most recently, the village committee has decided it will file Public Interest Litigation (PIL)[14] against the local government in the state's high court on the basis that the government failed to respond to the community's Right to Information application.

14 PILs came into use in the 1980s and were promoted by Justice Krishna Iyer and Justice P N Bhagwati as a means for citizens to tackle inaction on laws enacted by the national and state governments. Filing a PIL is not as difficult as a normal legal case. In the past, courts have taken up PILs on the basis of letters. Despite some hostility from Government and others, the judiciary has stated clearly that it has a duty to protect the rights of every citizen and ensure that all live with dignity.

Lessons

- This example highlights the courage and determination needed by communities to challenge power. Especially when corruption has infected all aspects of government and law. In India, cases of violence against individuals, as well as whole communities who challenge fraud, are not unknown.
- It is essential for NGOs and communities to carry out risk assessments before and during this type of advocacy initiative. Where corruption is widespread, rights and laws have no meaning because justice can be bought, or simply denied.
- It is possible that without the support of an external actor, in this case an NGO, the community would have been too worried by threats to continue their advocacy work. Even with NGO support, the situation was risky.
- The case emphasises the need for GTF partner NGOs to locate alternative local champions who can link to CBOs and provide support, guidance and protection when necessary[15].

Questions

GTF partners report that the work of empowering marginalised communities requires staff with a high level of skills and experience. Finding and retaining these staff members is not easy and has been an issue for NGOs for decades.

The low salaries usually paid by local NGOs are only part of the problem. The main obstacle is that staff are required to spend the majority of their time in isolated, remote areas where transport, school and health services are poor (if they exist at all) and communications are weak. This makes the posts unattractive, especially to those with families who do not want to risk their family members' health or education.

What incentives could be offered to highly qualified staff to make the posts attractive?

- To what extent would enabling staff to be in continuous touch with the outside world by supplying them with high-tech communications equipment (and an allowance to cover the costs of using them) help? Would donors understand the need to fund these?
- What impact would a significant increase in annual leave days have?
- Could all such posts be filled by a two staff, both of whom worked with all the communities, and both of whom also shared duties in another post located at the NGO's headquarters so that each could alternate between locations?
- Could very short contracts be created for this type of work – from the start putting an emphasis on creating links between communities and local professionals who could support them?
- How successful have past NGO attempts been at solving the problem by investing considerable time and money in training local community members to take on the programme officer roles usually filled by outsiders? How sympathetic have donors been to this approach?

15 See also handbook five, *Sustainability in WASH governance programmes*. Available at: www.wateraid.org/gtflearninghandbooks

2.2.2 Dealing with marginalisation and exclusion

Marginalisation

The condition of being separated from mainstream society, considered not to be a part of it and forced to live on its fringes. Along with material deprivation, marginalised individuals and communities often are exploited by other members of society and neglected by governments when it comes to policies, programmes and services[16].

Exclusion

Exclusion is the process by which certain groups and types of people are kept apart, systematically discriminated against and denied the right to participate in many other areas of social interaction, including decision-making. As a result they suffer a range of deprivations[17].

In terms of marginalisation and exclusion, each culture has its own categories. Some common groups include: women; physically or mentally disabled people; older or very young people; members of ethnic, indigenous or religious minorities; low caste or no-caste people; people living with HIV and AIDS; migrants and displaced people. Individuals and communities affected often experience deprivation and discrimination that considerably aggravates poverty and significantly decreases access to clean water and toilets.

Changing the attitudes and beliefs that lie behind social exclusion requires special techniques. It is normal for there to be resistance and changes do not happen quickly.

The first step for NGOs is often to examine their own prejudices and ensure that all staff accept the principles of equity and inclusion and behave accordingly, not only at work but in all other areas of their lives.

The next step is to work with communities and other WASH stakeholders. This usually includes three related activities:

- Empowering marginalised or excluded people to become confident about their equal status and their right to participate in community decision-making.
- Working with people who are not marginalised to explore the foundations for discrimination, and to encourage them to reconsider their attitudes and beliefs.
- Engaging government officials and service providers in discussions about marginalisation and exclusion, its impact on people and any laws and policies that government has put in place.

Inclusion

Inclusion is ensuring that all people are able to participate fully in all areas of work, society and politics. Inclusion goes beyond access to services and involves supporting people to engage in wider processes to ensure that their rights and needs are recognised. Also key is that inclusion principles are integrated into policies and political processes in order to uphold those rights, including their rights to WASH services[18].

16 Adapted from Young I M (2000) 'Five faces of oppression' in: Adams M (ed) *Readings for diversity and social justice*, pp 35-49. Routledge, New York, USA
17 Adapted from www.gsdrc.org/go/topic-guides/social-exclusion/social-exclusion-as-a-process and www.combatpoverty.ie/povertyinireland/glossary.htm
18 WaterAid (2010) *Equity and inclusion framework*. WaterAid, London, UK. Available at: www.wateraid.org/uk/what%20we%20do/our%20approach/research%20and%20publications/view%20publication?id=d98d98ad-b605-4894-97cf-0c7682e62b04

GTF partners were able to use a number of tools and methods for dealing with marginalisation and exclusion that have been developed by WaterAid and related organisations, including the excellent materials on the inclusive WASH website (www.inclusivewash.org.au), WaterAid's awareness-raising training guide[19], WaterAid Nepal's study of gender approaches[20], and the WaterAid/Water Engineering and Development Centre (WEDC) training materials on the social model of exclusion[21] as well as WEDC's equity and inclusion resources website[22].

Case study: Championing the involvement of women – FANCA in Central America

FAN Central America (FANCA) and its GTF partners have promoted gender equity among community water boards in Central America. Historically, nearly all members of these boards were men.

Cultural traditions in most parts of Central America assign women purely domestic roles. To begin to change these ideas, FANCA and GTF partners engaged both men and women in a series of dialogues about gender roles in order to raise their awareness of the difference between culturally driven ideas and real differences between men and women.

In all four Central American countries where GTF partners worked, women were keen to be involved in the community water boards, not least because it is usually their responsibility to ensure there is sufficient water in the home. Great progress has been made and women are now part of all the boards, having earned the respect of their male colleagues for their dedication and high quality input.

Nevertheless, FANCA is concerned that the new opportunities for involvement in the boards are yet another burden for women who already take responsibility for their homes, farms and children. FANCA now believes that it is essential to make changes across the whole of women's lives for them to be able to achieve real equity.

Costa Rica is an exception to the general rule in the region that women should be restricted to the domestic sphere, because its culture allows women to have a greater involvement in public life. There, the only barrier to their membership of Community Water Boards was that only the owner of the family home was entitled to vote in board elections and nearly all homeowners were men. FANCA successfully advocated a change in the rules and the new national law states that each household has a vote but it does not have to be made by the homeowner.

See Section 6.1 for more information on analysing barriers.

19 WaterAid (undated) *Equity and inclusion play your part – Awareness raising training guide*. Available at: www.gadnetwork.org.uk/storage/Equity%20and%20Inclusion%20-%20awareness%20raising%20training%20guide.pdf
20 WaterAid Nepal (2009) *Seen but not heard? A review of the effectiveness of gender approaches in the provision of water and sanitation services*. WaterAid Nepal, Kathmandu. Available at: www.wateraid.org/~/media/Publications/gender-approach-water-sanitation-provision.pdf
21 Jones H et al (undated) *Equity and inclusion in WASH provision – Using the social model of exclusion*. WaterAid and Water Engineering and Development Centre (WEDC) Loughborough University, UK. Available at: wedc.lboro.ac.uk/resources/learning/EI_WASH_Social_model_of_exclusion.pdf
22 WaterAid and WEDC website: Equity and inclusion in water, sanitation and hygiene resources. wedc-knowledge.lboro.ac.uk/collections/equity-inclusion/

2.2.3 Creating formal organisations

Typically, community mobilisation involves the formation of CBOs. However, in some GTF countries, WASH-focused CBOs already existed. These included, for example, the community water boards in Nicaragua and Ghana and the village water and sanitation committees mandated by the Government of India. Where there was an existing organisation, GTF partners focused on strengthening capacity rather than creating new groups.

Where new organisations were formed or existing ones strengthened, the role of the GTF programme was to take the lead in creating and sustaining the drive for better governance and management of WASH facilities.

Since communities usually rely on flexible reactions rather than formal organisations to deal with their problems, NGOs need to convince them that having a formal organisation will add value to their activities.

GTF partners in Madagascar found it quite easy to mobilise communities if they provided them with concrete examples from their own experience that illustrated the following:

- Problem solving is more effective in a group, such as a CBO, that works together regularly.
- A CBO whose members are elected and represent a wide range of community members helps to prevent hidden agendas being taken forward. Similarly, this type of CBO also is good at preventing personal interests being given priority over community interests.
- Individual citizens are rarely able to exert significant influence on the policies and practices of governments without a collective voice[23]. But when citizens come together in groups their power increases.

Process for forming village WASH committees

In India and Bangladesh, the key processes involved in forming village WASH committees were:

- Discussions with community members during situation analysis assessments (see p17). During this consultation process, community members were sensitised about the aims of the GTF programme and how it would be implemented.
- Once the community decided it wished to be involved in the programme, small group discussions were held, during which community members were informed about the need to form village WASH committees. The basic structure, functions and responsibilities of these committees were explained[24].
- GTF partners emphasised the need for inclusive membership of the committees – that there should be an equal number of men and women and that minority and vulnerable groups, including those usually discriminated against, should be represented.
- Active encouragement was given to village leaders to be engaged in meetings from the start of the process so as to avoid unnecessary tensions.
- Further orientation meetings were held with community members giving them the opportunity to finalise how they wanted to structure their WASH committees.
- Elections involving all sections of the community were held to vote in the committee members. One person was chosen to act as the committee's convenor. In general, committees had between eight and 12 members, half of which were women.
- Once elected, the village WASH committee members were trained in basic organisational skills, including record keeping and fund management.

23 The very rich and those with high social status are the exceptions to this general rule, alongside those who own and control the media.
24 In India, village water and sanitation committees have to be formed in line with the Government of India (Rural Water Supply Department) guidelines.

Figure 3: The empowerment process

Dimensions	Ingredients
Political power	Ethical, accountable political leaders
	Government and public recognition of citizens' rights and knowledge
	Citizens' involvement in monitoring change
	Strong citizens' organisations consulted regularly by government
	Policy, legal and institutional reforms
	Communicating message to wider society
Empowerment	Forming alliances
	Lobbying and dialogue with government and other stakeholders
	Gathering evidence
	Planning and implementing strategies
	Gaining new skills
	Forming organisations to work together
Community awareness	Analysis of common problems
	Learning about rights, entitlements, laws and rules
	Questioning why things are the way they are (status quo)
	Reflection
Individual awareness	Dialogue with others

Source: adapted from Veneklasen, 2002

2.3 Building a picture of local WASH governance and services

Except where they are working with existing community-level WASH organisations (for example CAPS in Nicaragua, or water and sanitation delivery boards in Ghana) it was usual for some form of situation analysis to be carried out by GTF partners at an early stage in their relationship with communities.

The exact content of situation analysis exercises varied across different partners and countries but generally included a review of both WASH services and WASH governance issues as follows:

- Researching the external context in terms of policies, laws, government programmes, local government plans and budgets, service providers, etc, to present to communities. Some partners produced simple written or visual materials on these elements for use by the communities they worked with.
- Looking at community perceptions of the role of government and other WASH stakeholders.
- Exploring any previous interactions between the community and local government or service providers.
- Counting the number of households in the community.
- Documenting existing WASH facilities, including which households had access to, and were using, safe water and/or toilets.
- Analysing the characteristics of households that had the best and worst access to WASH facilities.

This type of context mapping is necessary to:

- Collect baseline information against which progress can be measured.
- Provide an opportunity to work with community members to create a shared understanding of the local context for WASH.
- Generate information on current needs, and priorities and the specific gaps that the project should aim to fill.

Note

Whatever method is used, it is essential that the community understands that participation will not be in exchange for WASH hardware before any exercises are undertaken. Instead, they can expect to gain knowledge of their rights and entitlements, an understanding of why better governance is important for WASH and all other areas of development, and the advocacy skills that will enable them to influence government to deliver the services they need.

One choice to be made is about when to involve community members in the exercise. Some partners started with a survey then began participatory activities. Others used participatory processes from the beginning.

2.3.1 Household surveys

Some partners began by conducting a household survey that explored the number and types of households, their access to different types of WASH facilities, their status in the communities, etc, and presented the results to the community to triangulate the data and to answer the following questions:

- What are the key WASH issues for people?
- What do people expect from NGO partners?
- What do they expect from the government?
- What do they want to achieve through the project?
- What are the likely benefits for different stakeholders?
- What resources can the community mobilise?
- What are the key local dynamics in terms of conflicts of interest?
- In the community, who is usually neglected?

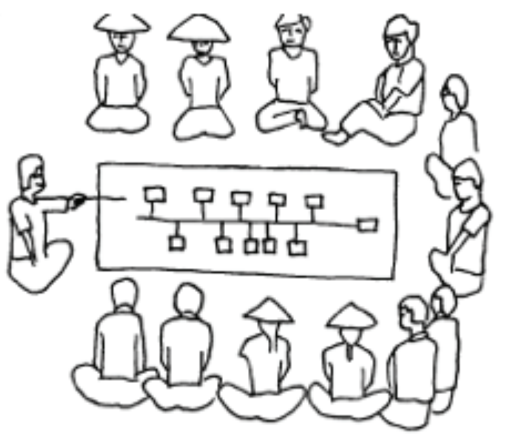
Others used a participatory social mapping exercise as outlined in the practical exercise in Section 5.2.

2.3.2 Participatory rural appraisal methods for generating additional information and knowledge

Regardless of how they started work with a community, WaterAid/FAN GTF partners almost always followed up with participatory methods of collecting data. Working jointly with community members not only delivers information but also builds knowledge and awareness of community participants. This ensures that everyone develops a good understanding of the local context for WASH services, including governance concerns, rights and entitlements and key external stakeholders.

Equally important is that participatory methods provide a space for community members to input their perspectives and opinions regarding priorities, aspirations, risks and realities so that these can become part of programme design. This is essential if the right issues and objectives are to be identified before the plan of action is prepared.

Source: Quang Ngai Province, 2007



Source: Quang Ngai Province, 2007

Some participatory rural appraisal tools[25] that partners used included:

- Wealth ranking
- Mapping relationships between social groups, rich and poor, etc
- Power analysis[26]
- Transect walks to review WASH facilities
- Focus group discussions on, for example, community values, village institutions, local history

During these exercises, GTF partners also identified community members who were potential candidates for village WASH committees.

More information on these methods is available in Section 6.

Are our expectations of CBOs realistic?

- For governance advocacy purposes, is it necessary for CBOs to meet at regular intervals for years on end? Would it be good enough if they came together only when there was a problem to be solved?
- Does it matter if CBOs decide to use their newly acquired skills to advocate for something other than they were trained for? Are our concerns more to do with our grant commitments than their fundamental needs and wishes?
- Do we expect too much from community groups?
  - Are we setting them standards that are not mirrored in our own organisations and lives?
  - How much of their spare time are we asking them to commit to GTF-related activities? Is this matched by the amount of time we commit to non-work, voluntary activities ourselves?
  - We insist that CBO membership should be include marginalised and vulnerable members of the community. How many staff in our own organisations are drawn from these groups?

25 For useful advice on how to use these tools, as well as an easy to understand introduction to other appraisal methods see: Quang Ngai Province Rural Development Programme (2007), *Participatory rural appraisal manual*. Department of Planning and Investment, Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Available at: fsnnetwork.org/sites/default/files/rudep_pra_guide.pdf; FAO Ethiopia (1999) *Conducting a PRA Training and Modifying PRA Tools to Your Needs*. FAO, Rome, Italy. Available at: http://www.fao.org/docrep/003/X5996E/X5996E00.HTM; and/or FAO St Lucia (2006) *Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) Manual*, FAO, Rome, Italy. Available at: www.rlc.fao.org/en/publications/pra-manual/
26 See handbook two, *Power analysis tools for WASH governance*. Available at: www.wateraid.org/gtflearninghandbooks

3. Capacity building for community empowerment and better local governance

3.1 The 'why' and 'what' of capacity building

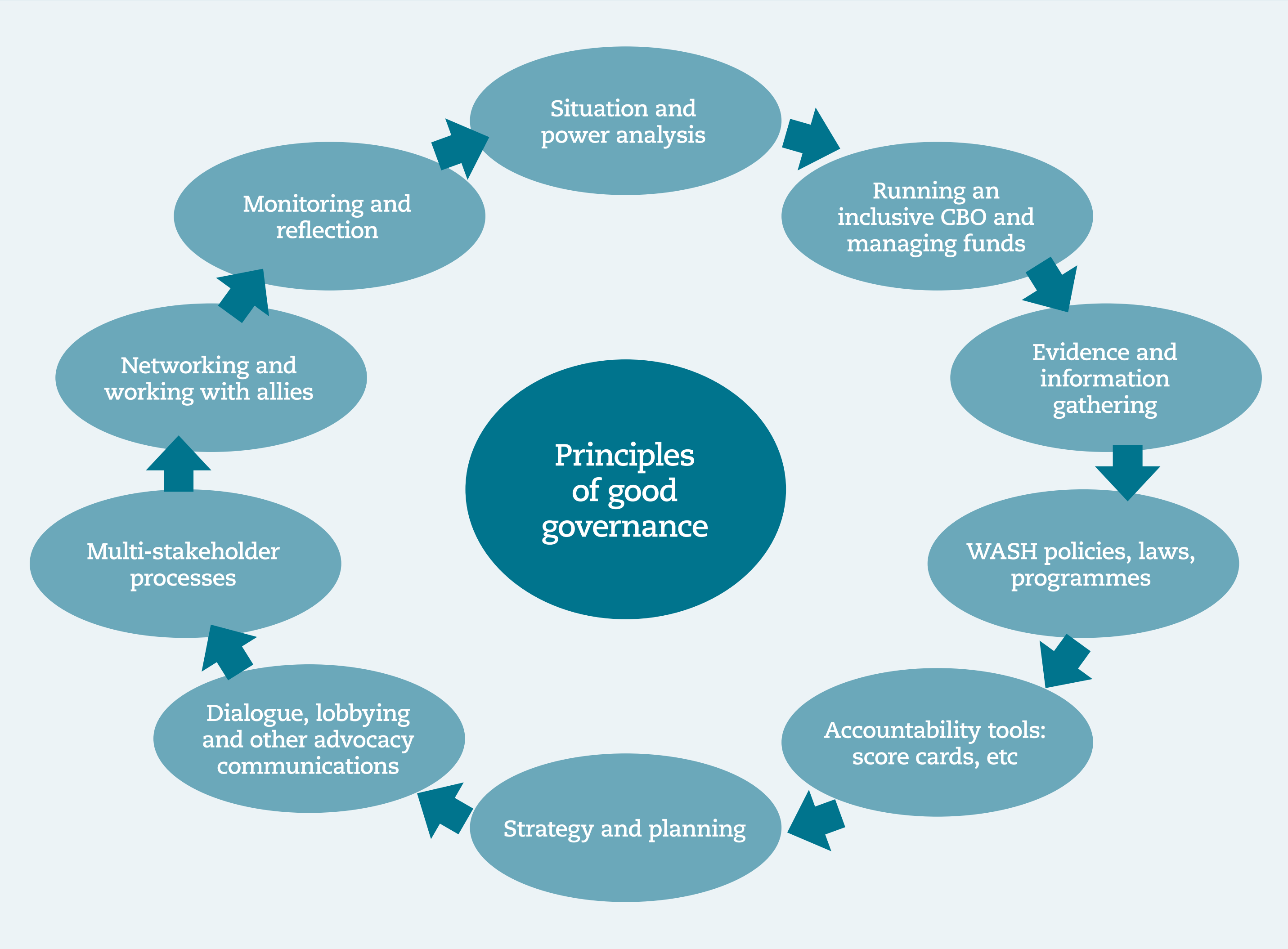
Capacity building should be both strategic and practical:
- Strategically, communities must be equipped with methods for analysing and reflecting on the issues they face, knowledge of their rights and entitlements, and a grasp of the choice of approaches they could use to respond. They also need to understand how to analyse power and form alliances with like-minded stakeholders.
- Practically, all capacity building should be based on a capacity needs assessment[27]. GTF communities generally needed to develop skills to use tools for evidence gathering and holding governments to account; communicating key messages and lobbying and negotiation skills for effective dialogue with decision-makers.

Capacity building by WaterAid/FAN GTF partners aimed to:
- Improve and strengthen community-level structures, eg water committees.
- Increase understanding of good governance and inclusion and why they are important.
- Increase knowledge of government WASH policies, laws, programmes and processes.
- Increase skills in power analysis, evidence gathering, advocacy, negotiation, networking, etc.

The focus of GTF partners' capacity building for local communities varied according to the country and context but elements included are shown in Figure 4. In addition, partners developed materials to supplement capacity building, including handbooks, manuals, leaflets, information briefs, brochures and flyers.

27 The WaterAid/FAN GTF programme has produced a special toolkit primarily for use by partner NGOs but easily adapted for communities: Keatman T (2012) *Governance and Transparency Fund capacity needs assessment tool*. WaterAid, London, UK. Available at: www.wateraid.org/~/media/Publications/GTF-capacity-needs-assessment-tool.ashx

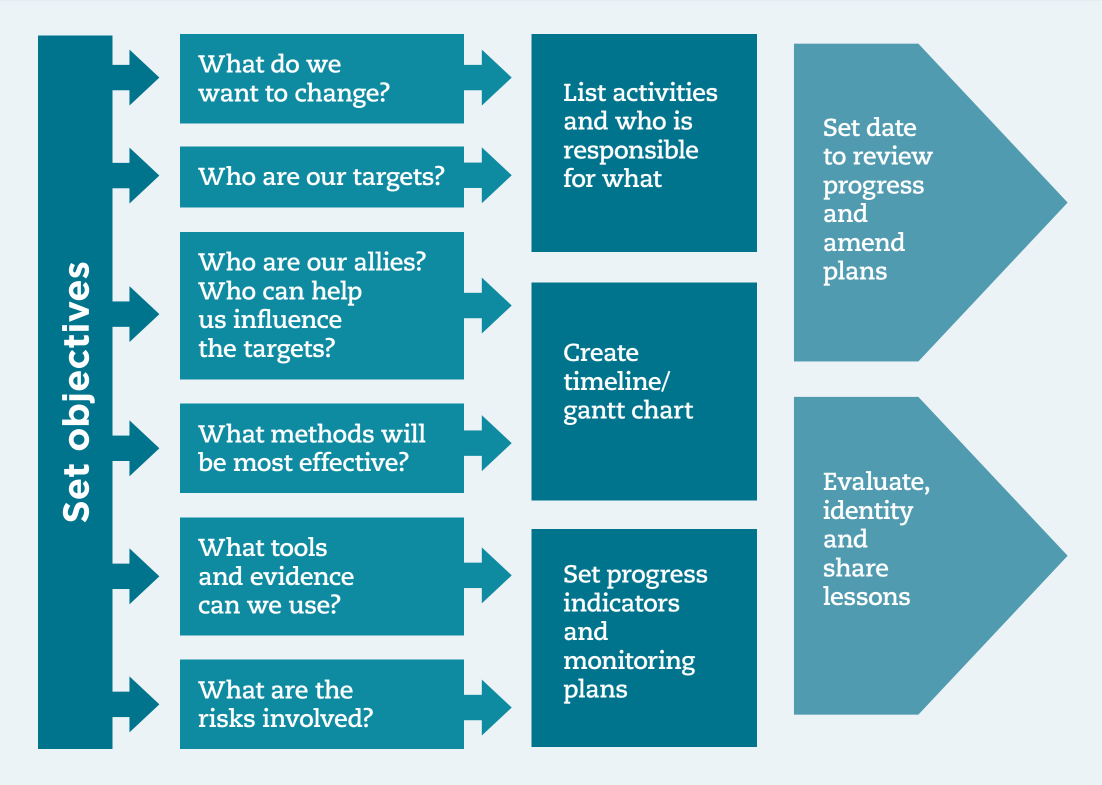
Figure 4: Areas of capacity building for communities



Capacity building for communities and CBOs was delivered both directly by GTF partners and by external experts and sister organisations. It involved formal training as well as mentoring of individuals and discussion workshops. In addition, GTF partners often accompanied CBOs to provide support during their first few lobby/dialogue meetings with government officials or service providers.

As part of their capacity building programme, it is important for WASH committees and the wider community to develop skills in planning and monitoring. There are many methods available for community-level planning. The method used in the practical exercise in Section 5.3 is useful because it allows communities to develop their own ideas about priorities and solutions to issues identified in the situation analysis, without having to make these fit into NGO agendas.

Figure 5: Community action plan diagram



Source: Adapted from Cordoba (2008) *Advocacy handbook for local groups*

3.2 A monitoring tool for communities

It is important for WASH committees to monitor their activities so that they can see what progress is being made and where blockages are emerging. For governance advocacy, change can take a long time. Without a sense of progress – at least in completing planned activities – it is easy to lose motivation. Monitoring also enables WASH committees to report back to the wider community.

GTF partner, Modern Architects for Rural India (MARI), developed the community-based monitoring tool (figure 6). The tool is used by communities every month to monitor progress at village level against each indicator. Once the review has taken place, actions are agreed by the community to ensure better progress on those indicators where little has been achieved. MARI staff report that the tool has been very useful in helping communities and the GTF programme to achieve their objectives within a given time frame.

The tool has played a critical role in not only identifying the gaps in services, and in community behaviours, but also prioritising key issues, which are later taken up by village WASH committees.

The exact content of a community-based monitoring tool should be discussed and agreed separately with each community (note that pictures or symbols can be used to replace words). Once this is done, the CBO members are trained in how to use it and the monitoring chart is put on permanent display in a place where everyone can see it.

Figure 6: MARI's community-based monitoring tool

	Paramaters/Indicators	Months				
	Number of:	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May etc.
1	Village WASH committee meetings conducted					
2	Families with access to safe drinking water					
3	Days families faced a drinking water shortage/crisis					
4	People practicing handwashing during critical times					
5	Families maintaining cleanliness around the house					
6	Children drinking water from a bore well on the school campus during the school hours					
7	Children using toilets in schools					
8	Families washing clothes close to handpumps					
9	Families drinking purified water					
10	Families drinking boiled and cooled water					
11	People who are ill due to poor sanitation					
12	Amount spent on health during the month					
13	Families who received an incentive from government to construct toilets					
14	Families who constructed toilets using their own money (no help from any source)					
15	Families using toilets					
16	Financial support received from the government to improve WASH facilities other than toilets					
17	Petitions (applications) submitted/filed					
18	Petitions (applications) solved					
19	Times the village water and sanitation committee had interactions/dialogues with government officials					
20	Times people used Right to Information (RTI) Act					
21	Times Village Wash Committee conducted a Social Audit on information collected through RTI applications					
22	People participated in Global events like World Toilet Day, World Water Week, etc					
23	People participating in training programmes					
24	Times government officials and elected representatives visited the village					
25	Phone calls people made to government officials on their issues					
26	Amount of money the government released to the village for improvement of services (value for money)					

4. Notes on the limitations of community-based approaches

As outlined in the GTF learning handbook on sustainability[28], **upward pressure from strong CBOs has to be supported by positive policies and institutional reforms for good governance to become a reality. It also needs to be accompanied by increased financing for WASH to meet the increased demand from community level.**

Community organisations need allies. These may be NGOs, respected local citizens, related CBOs and networks, or local governments, but without some external support, at least in the medium term, they may fail. Actively building these alliances is something that should start soon after the CBO is formed.

Decentralisation of power and finances, as well as responsibilities, is often seen as the way to solve problems at local level but where corruption is widespread further decentralisation is likely to make things worse not better. Reforms of the civil service, especially cultural and management reforms, are also needed.

The support required for community-driven WASH governance advocacy

In brief, comprehensive support requires[29]:

- Creating a supportive national and local-level policy and institutional environment.
- Increasing WASH finances to enable positive responses to informed CBO demands.
- Facilitating the emergence of CBOs able to manage WASH systems and services.
- Ensuring CBOs are inclusive and sensitive to a variety of needs.
- Developing rules to ensure CBOs are not captured by elites or outsiders.
- Investing in capacity building for CBOs.
- Facilitating community access to information.
- Maintaining flexibility in the design of strategies and plans to ensure these are driven by communities.
- Creating simple monitoring and review mechanisms open to all community members.
- Forming external alliances with local groups, government or influential citizens.
- Investing in an exit strategy.

28 Handbook five, *Sustainability in WASH governance programmes*. Available at: www.wateraid.org/gtflearninghandbooks
29 Adapted from Dongier P et al (2001) 'Community driven development', Chapter 9 in *Poverty reduction strategy source book*. World Bank, Washington DC, USA. Available at: siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPRS1/Resources/383606-1205334112622/5805_chap9.pdf

5. Conclusions

Well-designed community-based governance programmes that are inclusive of marginalised and excluded groups can give communities the confidence to speak out on issues that affect them.

The challenge this presents when working with communities and individuals who have long histories of discrimination, neglect and powerlessness is frequently underestimated, especially by donors who spend little time with these groups. Empowering people in these circumstances demands special skills and abilities, but finding staff with both the skills and also the will to spend long periods of time in remote areas can be difficult.

Capacity building for communities, usually carried out by NGOs, is an essential element in creating the conditions for success. This can take many forms and often demands creative thinking on the part of NGOs to develop methods suitable for working with non-literate community members. However, it takes time, energy and resources to build community capacity to advocate their rights and entitlements. Since governments can be very slow to respond, or sometimes simply refuse to do so, it also takes determination, patience and good strategies and plans to achieve community objectives.

For the WaterAid/FAN GTF programme, independent consultants[30] report that, across the programme, CBOs and community members have a good understanding of their rights and entitlements and are already voicing their concerns to government. Many have become resilient and seem ready to work independently to demand accountability and responsiveness from local officials and service providers.

In addition, the membership of most CBOs is inclusive, with women, minorities, vulnerable groups (including dailit people in India) well represented, participating in activities and enjoying increased access to safe water and sanitation. Other CBO members are usually willing to represent the views of these groups in cases when they themselves are uncomfortable to engage with government. Nevertheless, it is important that continuous progress is made towards excluded groups feeling confident enough to represent themselves.

For the long-term sustainability of the WASH CBOs that have been established, it is important that they form local alliances. Equally significant is that they are given a comprehensive picture of what is needed to achieve good WASH governance, so that they can understand the strengths and limitations of what they can expect to achieve alone, and be conscious of the need to find ways to link with sister organisations and networks at all levels.

30 Based on internal WaterAid reports from five independent regional consultants: David Ddamurila, East Africa; Harold Essuku, West Africa; Pradeep Narayanan, South Asia; Laetitia Razafimamonjy, Southern Africa; and Haydee Rodriquez, Central America.

6. Practical exercises

6.1 Exercise one: Analysing barriers to inclusion in WASH services

For those not familiar with barrier analysis methods, it is strongly recommended that before beginning the exercise they view the presentation by WaterAid and WEDC at: http://wedc.lboro.ac.uk/resources/learning/EI_WASH_Social_model_of_exclusion.pdf

This provides an easy to understand illustrated guide to barriers and can be adapted to any excluded or marginalised group of people.

GTF partners used this tool to explore the specific barriers faced by marginalised and excluded people in relation to WASH.

Timing: 2-2.5 hours

Materials: Large sheets of paper and marker pens or a blackboard and chalks

Venue: Any quiet, sheltered place with enough space for small group work and to hold a plenary session.

Participants: Not more than 20 people

Process:
i) Introduce the ideas of marginalisation, exclusion, inclusion and equity. Illustrate with examples from the local context the impact this can have on WASH access and more generally. Check whether everyone understands the ideas and invite questions.

ii) In the plenary, ask participants to brainstorm the categories of people locally who are most marginalised and excluded. Write or draw the results so that everyone can see them. Facilitators should suggest categories that they think have been missed and ask participants whether they should be put on the list or not.

iii) Ask the participants to divide into small groups of no more than four people. The task of each small group is to use their own experience to discuss and identify the barriers that prevent, or create problems for the marginalised groups they have identified when trying to access or use WASH facilities.

Each of the barriers identified should be placed under one of four headings (see example chart in on p27):
- Physical location (eg in wrong area, unsafe, etc)
- Attitudes (eg looked down on, hated, feared, not wanted by mainstream society, etc)
- Individual's limitations (eg unable to walk, feeling worthless, etc)
- Institutional (eg lack of laws, policies, political representation, etc)

Tell the groups they have 30 minutes to do their work in small groups.

Tips

- Facilitators must decide in advance whether it will be most effective for each group to have a mixture of people – men and women, old and young, from mainstream and minority backgrounds, disabled and able-bodied, high and low status, etc – or for the different types of people present to be grouped together.
- If there are many categories of marginalisation, facilitators should select only three or four for all groups to work on or divide up the categories so that each group has no more than three or four.
- For grassroots groups, the institutional heading may be dropped if it causes unnecessary confusion.
- When working with non-literate people, there should be a facilitator in every small group to help record group findings, ideally using drawings.

iv) Return to plenary session. Ask groups to report back on the barriers identified. Invite questions and comments. Invite people to discuss their experiences of identifying barriers and what they have learned.

v) Give a summary of the common and/or major barriers that have been identified. Then ask people to pair with the person next to them and try to think of one or two ways in which the barriers could be overcome. Give them about eight minutes to do this.

Go around the room asking each pair in turn for one idea to record on the flipchart/blackboard. When all the pairs have spoken, start again at the beginning until all the ideas have been collected.

Ask for any comments, questions or additional suggestions.

Tips

- Facilitators may find it useful to refer to the 'Barriers and solutions' chart on p28.
- If participants find it difficult to think about solutions, give one or two examples to start them thinking.

vi) Congratulate participants on their good work. Note that thinking about these things can be challenging. Ask them now they have identified the barriers and potential solutions, what do they think their next steps should be?

Hold a short discussion and record the suggestions made. Facilitators should add any of their own.

vii) Thank everyone and close.

Figure 7: Sample barrier identification chart

Category	Physical location barriers	Attitude barriers	Individual's limitations barriers	Institutional barriers
Women				
Dalits				
Christians				
Visually disabled				

Figure 8: Sample barriers and solutions

Barriers examples	Solutions examples
Individual	
• Physical limitations (difficulty walking, squatting, balancing) • Poor eyesight • Prone to infections • Lack of education/information	• Mobility equipment – wheelchairs, trolleys, crutches, physiotherapy • Spectacles, white canes • Medical treatment • HIV programmes provide health/hygiene messages
Environmental	
• Long distances • Uneven, slippery overgrown paths • Steep steps to toilets and water points • Narrow toilet cubicles • Dark inside cubicles • Uneven, slippery wet/dirty floors • No support rails, no seats • Taps and pump handles too high • No facilities for menstruation management • Missing toilet door locks	• Install facilities nearer to users • Make paths level, smooth ramped earth, clear obstacles • Construct low, even steps, with handrail; ramp as alternative • Cubicle with wider space inside • Provide natural light • Latrine floors with smooth non-slip surface, improve drainage • Provide support rails; provide toilet seat • Water points with taps at different heights; longer pump handles • Provide incinerators or pits to dispose of soiled cloths • Adequate water for personal hygiene inside or near toilet cubicles • Ensure locks on toilet doors
Institutional	
• Lack of policies, strategies, legislation • Lack of information and skills of WASH staff • Users lack knowledge of accessible options • Lack of data on needs of marginalised • Lack of consultation with/representation of marginalised groups • Lack of standard designs for accessible facilities • Lack of collaboration between relevant agencies	• Provide evidence to influence policy • Capacity-building of WaterAid & partner staff • Provide information; build community facilities demonstrating accessibility options • Improve research, disaggregated data collection; • Situation assessment of existing facilities • Ensure elderly, disabled, women, people living with HIV/AIDS on user committees • Involve representative groups of users, e.g. DPOs in designing/planning accessible facilities • Build partnerships and capacity of relevant NGOs, eg HIV programmes include hygiene promotion package
Social/attitudinal	
• Misinformation about disability/HIV/menstruation, etc • Toilet pits emptied by women • Discrimination, neglect, exclusion	• Improve health information to girls • Public awareness campaigns, eg on HIV transmission, use influential figures, religious leaders • Adhere to Act for Abolition of manual scavenging

Source: WEDC training. Available at: http://wedc-knowledge.lboro.ac.uk/collections/equity-inclusion

6.2 Exercise two: Social mapping

Social mapping captures social structures in a specific community or village. It can be used to explore the structure of the community in terms of ethnic background or caste, religion, education, wealth, etc, and how these affect the distribution of assets and services, such as WASH facilities. Because social mapping uses visualisation to encourage participation and discussion it works well where literacy levels are low.

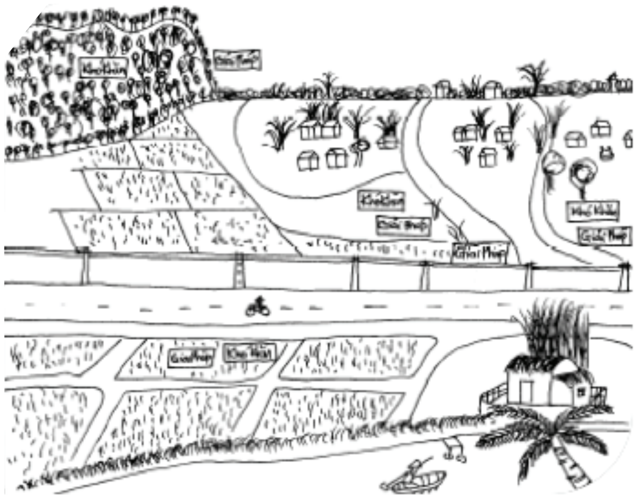
Time needed: Up to three hours.

Materials needed: Flipchart paper and coloured pens; or a blackboard and chalk; or an areas of flat ground and physical markers – stones, twigs, paint, dried beans/pulses, cardboard, etc

Venue: Any popular village meeting place – indoors or in the open air in sheltered locations

Participants: An inclusive approach sets a good example for future activities, so alongside any literate community members (teachers, primary health care workers, village heads, etc) it is good to ensure a balance of men and women, age, and people from poor households and from marginalised groups.

A good number to work with is ten or 12 participants prepared to stay for the whole session. Unless an experienced participatory rural assessment facilitator is present who is confident about working with big groups, expect to need one facilitator for every five or so participants. The maximum number for any exercise is 25. This would require a minimum of four facilitators present, ideally five or six.



Source: Quang Ngai Province, 2007

Larger numbers are difficult to work with, although sometimes dividing people into 'main' participants and observers can help.

> **Lesson**
>
> In some cultures it may be necessary to hold different sessions for men and women to ensure women have a chance to openly express their ideas and experiences.

Process:

i) Finalise the date, time and venue for exercise with community members. The purpose of the social mapping must be made very clear to all participants, to avoid them coming to the wrong conclusions, for example, that you will provide WASH facilities or that there is some political purpose behind the exercise.

ii) Use a prepared set of questions to steer the discussions and draw a map of the community using the information gathered. Use different colours to indicate which groups live where, the location of working and non-working WASH facilities, etc.

Tips[31]

- Social mapping requires well-prepared facilitation. Be aware that some of the issues that will be discussed can be sensitive within the community.
- Be flexible, patient and maintain a good sense of humour.
- Avoid complicated words and concepts.
- Encourage and motivate participants and ensure shy and quiet members of the group are given an opportunity to express their opinions.
- Make sure the group keeps to the topic but be flexible in dealing with important additional information that emerges.
- Listen attentively and do not teach.
- Repeat what people say in order to confirm that there is a good understanding of the discussion.
- When necessary act as a catalyst for the discussion

In addition to producing a map, **it is essential to give someone the specific responsibility of writing down all the information gathered**, including number and type of households, different ethnic and social groups, WASH facilities, etc.

GTF partners used some or all of the following questions:

- How many households are there in the village and where are they located?
- Is the number of households growing or shrinking – ie is there a lot of migration? Why has this happened?
- What religious groups are found in the village?
- What ethnic groups/castes are found in the village?
- If there are different religious and/or ethnic/caste groups, where in the village are they located?
- How many female-headed households are there? Where are they located?
- Which households are most neglected by the rest of the community or the government or service provider?
- Where are the main water sources that are used for drinking, washing, and cooking? Which households use which ones? What type of source are they – eg open well, tube well, pond, river? How many facilities are currently functioning effectively?
- How many households have latrines? How many latrines are functioning and used for the purpose intended? Is there open defecation?
- Which resource (eg water, land, forest, livestock) do you have the most problems with?

iii) Review the map with the community members present. Is there anything or anyone else that should be on the map? Ask them what they notice about the distribution of WASH facilities. Why do they think this is?

iv) Ask people who is responsible for providing WASH facilities? Why do they think facilities have not been provided to everyone? What sort of relationships does the community have with local government officials? What about service providers (if any)? How would they like these relationships to change?

31 Based on FAO Ethiopia (1999) *Conducting a PRA training and modifying PRA tools to your needs.* Available at: www.fao.org/Participation/english_web_new/content_en/Sector_doc/PRA_nutrition.pdf

v) Summarise key points from the map: the number of households, different groups present, water sources and toilets and how they are distributed, etc. Tell the community about your plans, eg starting a project, doing some more, similar exercises, forming a CBO, etc.

6.3 Exercise three: Community-level planning

Time needed: Two hours

Materials: Large sheets of paper and marker pens; or a blackboard and chalks

Venue: Any quiet, sheltered place with enough space for small group work and a plenary session

Participants: A group of not more than 20 people, ideally 12-15

Process:
i) Set a time and place for the exercise and invite participants to attend.

ii) Remind participants of the key findings from the situation analysis, and any other participatory rural analysis or equity and inclusion exercises. Use the original charts, drawings and/or models produced to illustrate the findings where possible.

iii) Say that it is time to move from analysis and information to solutions and planning. Divide participants into groups of three with people sat next to each other. Ask them to spend a few minutes identifying what they think are the three most important issues that need to be dealt with.

Ask each group to feed back its top three priorities and record these on a flipchart/ blackboard. Where the same issue is repeated by another group, simply give it a tick for every time this happens.

Review the results to see if there are more than five priorities. If there are, ask people to vote for the most important ones so that there are only five.

iv) Explore solutions and potential actions to be taken in plenary by taking each priority issue in turn and asking:
- Who is affected by the problem?
- What are the community's ideas for solutions?
- Which of these can be implemented by the community?
- Which need to be implemented by outside actors?

Make a list of the options for each priority issue.

v) Tell participants that it is now time to make strategic choices between the issues based on their analysis of what is possible given the resources available, equity criteria and any social, cultural or political considerations.

Facilitate a plenary discussion to arrive at one or two top priorities to work on straight away. Note that work on the other issues identified can still take place, but not immediately.

vi) Develop an action plan by answering the following questions:
- What will be done?
- How it will be done?
- Who will do what?
- Where it will be done?
- When it will be done?
- How much money and/or time will be needed?
- Where will the money come from?

vii) Establish objectives and potential review criteria by asking participants:
- What will be the effect/result of the actions?
- When will this effect be seen?
- Who will benefit?

Tips

- Make sure that a record is made of the answers to questions.
- Allow participants time to discuss these questions before arriving at an agreed answer.
- Do not volunteer people who are absent for activities without also suggesting a substitute from the present group.
- Encourage realism – invite people to consider their other work and social responsibilities before committing themselves to very ambitious timelines.

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https://wedc-knowledge.lboro.ac.uk/collections/equity-inclusion
WaterAid and WEDC on equity and inclusion in water, sanitation and hygiene resources

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