



Inclusive WASH Project

Session 3 - People with disabilities

Summary Report

The third session in the Inclusive WASH Project, focused on people with disabilities, took place between 5-16 December 2011. It was co-facilitated by Hazel Jones from the Water, Engineering and Development Centre (WEDC) at Loughborough University in the UK and Clare Hanley from the CBM-Nossal Institute Partnership for Disability Inclusive Development in Australia.

The session included two online 'webinars' (training sessions) of approximately 1 hour each, an online discussion forum and a resource library. This report contains a brief overview of each webinar.

For more information, including downloading the webinar presentations and accessing the resource library, please visit www.inclusivewash.org.au.

Webinar 1 – Disability inclusive WASH

Nine participants from across the globe from different sector backgrounds, including WASH, education and disability.

Hazel began by setting the presentation in the context of the social model of disability and highlighted the key arguments – poverty reduction, health, education, economic, rights – for the importance of making WASH inclusive. A range of barriers preventing access to WASH were identified including individual limitations, environmental, social/attitudinal and institutional barriers. Some examples of low-cost solutions to environmental barriers were then presented, addressing not only solutions for using the facility itself (support rails, seats, etc.) but also encompassing getting to the facility, (reducing distance, improving paths, etc.) and getting in or on it (ramps and widened entrances).

A distinction was then made between the different approach needed depending on whether facilities were for household or institutional level. At a household level – household latrines for example, an individual approach to improving accessibility is recommended, i.e. tailored to the needs of individual household members. For communal and institutional facilities, however, aimed at a wide range of users, an inclusive design approach is required, to ensure facilities are accessible for the broadest possible proportion of the target population, including menstruating women and girls, frail elderly people, people with chronic illnesses, and small children as well as people with disabilities.

Moving on from environmental solutions, it is important to improve not only *what* is provided, but also the *approach* to service delivery. Key issues to consider include

- consultation processes that ensure the voices of the least powerful, including disabled people, are heard, from planning & design stage onwards;
- during data collection (e.g. baseline surveys) asking the right questions, disaggregating data according to age and disability;

- making information about low-cost accessibility options and inclusive designs needed in user-friendly formats.

Examples were shown of practical ways that people with disabilities have taken the initiative in developing their own facilities, and got involved in evaluating the accessibility of infrastructure in collaboration with engineers, thereby serving to increase their own self-esteem and standing in the community.

Webinar 2 – Disability inclusive WASH Case studies

Sixteen participants from across Asia and the Pacific participated in this webinar, from a range of organisations. These included those implementing WASH projects in the field, international non-government organisations, donors and research institutions.

The webinar gave participants a chance to consider how the theory discussed in Webinar 1 can be implemented in practice. It discussed some of the challenges of taking a disability inclusive approach and strategies to overcome these challenges.

Three case studies were discussed:

- Muzarabani WASH Project in Zimbabwe – implemented by World Vision
- Kisarawe Water, Sanitation & Hygiene Project Phase 2 in Tanzania – implemented by Plan
- Disability Inclusive Disaster Preparedness in Bangladesh – implemented by the Centre for Disability and Development (CDD)

These case studies highlighted different levels of disability inclusion, from people with disabilities being included as beneficiaries of WASH infrastructure, to being actively included as participants of the project and included in decision making.

Some of the challenges identified in the case studies were encouraging people with disabilities to participate; overcoming physical barriers which restrict the mobility of people with disabilities; and challenging negative attitudes and behaviours within the community.

There was a vibrant discussion throughout the webinar on the online chat. Topics of particular interest to participants were how to monitor and evaluate disability inclusion, the challenges of conducting reliable baseline surveys and the use of drama as a tool to engage the community around the rights of people with disabilities.

Please visit the Inclusive WASH resource library to find more resources on the WASH for people living with disabilities:

www.inclusivewash.org.au