

## Unit 21:

# Designing a pit latrine slab

### Purpose

*To demonstrate a method of engaging people in discussion about technical issues.*

Place a large sheet of paper on the floor, preferably on a smooth hard surface. Draw a keyhole in the centre of the paper. Ask each participant in turn to squat over the hole and draw around his or her feet. One person should pretend to be pregnant (e.g. have a heavy cushion tied to their stomach). Another person should pretend to have a problem with their leg and be unable to bend it much.

### Gender message

*Men and women use infrastructure in different ways, due to their sex and their socially determined roles.*

*If the participants are all from one group, you need to explain that people of other ages/genders/ethnicities (even locally within regions)/ physical abilities may squat in a different position and need the footrests in another place.*

### Engineering message

*People can help design their own infrastructure if they are asked correctly.*

Discuss the results of the exercise.

- ? Does one size fit all?
- ? How about people who are not in the group - children, old people, men or women?
- ? Did other factors get raised (e.g. size of superstructure, need for grab rails, paint the footrests white for partially sighted people)

### Materials

*Sheet of paper and pen, or mark directly onto the floor or use a pit latrine platform without footrests.*

This can be used as a starting point for other discussions about designing latrines, e.g.

- ? does everybody use the same latrine or do men/ women/ children/ relatives use different latrines,
- ? are there other issues that should be considered - privacy/easy to clean/convenient/safe/snakes/hand washing/anal cleansing
- ? what else are latrines used for - washing/changing sanitary towels/ sex/smoking?
- ? what shouldn't they be used for - but are: hiding during school hours/bullying/storage/chicken sheds

### Time

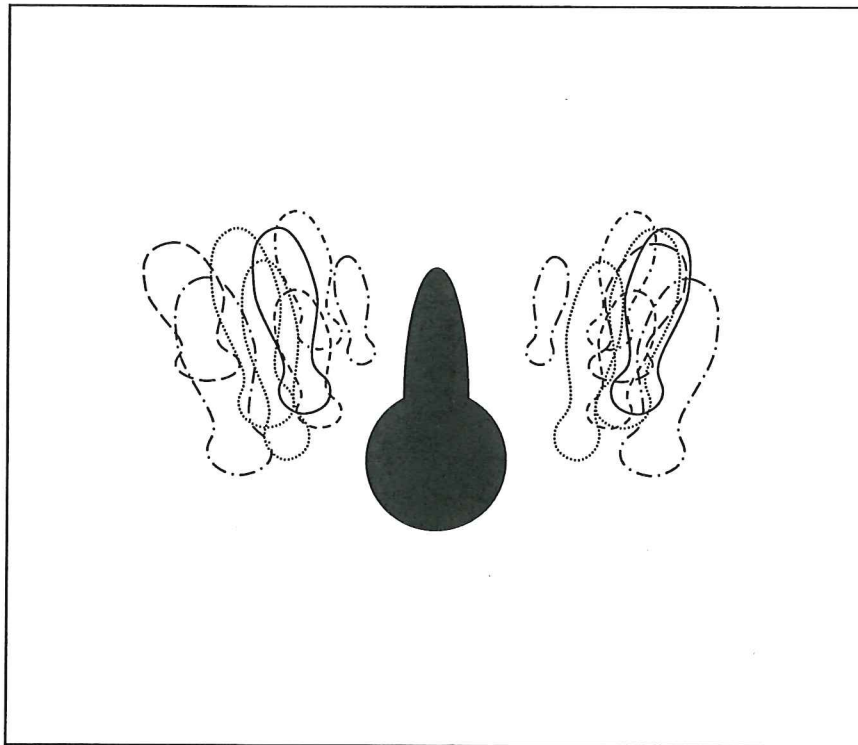
*10 -20 minutes*

### Hints

This is a sensitive subject. Participants may prefer do this unit in single

sex groups or even one at a time in private, with the results discussed in the whole group.

*Draw just the slab (at least 600mmx600mm) and a keyhole.  
The participants draw around each other's feet.*



**Figure 20. Drawing of a pit latrine slab**