



**arche noVa**  
Initiative for People in Need

Sustainability of Infrastructure Projects in Developing Countries

## Structure and Functions of WASH committees in rural areas

A Guideline



July 2012



**Authors:**

Karin Uckrow; Yvonne Stephan

**Contact office:**

arche noVa – Initiative for people in need  
Weißeritzstrasse 3  
01067 Dresden  
Germany

Ph: +49 351 481 984 0  
Fax: + 49 351 481 984 70  
Mail: [info@arche-nova.org](mailto:info@arche-nova.org)

[www.arche-nova.org](http://www.arche-nova.org)

**Photos from arche noVa**

**Copyright © 2012 arche noVa – Initiative for people in need**



## Table of Contents

Abbreviations .....	4
O. Introduction .....	5
1. Defining the purpose of a WASH committee .....	6
2. Social Mobilization of the Community .....	6
3. Composition of the WASH committees.....	8
4. Defining the functions and responsibilities of the WASH committee members.....	9
5. Role and responsibilities of the WASH committee.....	11
6. Role and responsibilities of the Community .....	12
7. Role and responsibilities of the Local NGO .....	13
8. Formal organization/legal status of the WASH committee.....	14
9. Capacity building of WASH committees .....	14
10. Financing of the WASH Facilities.....	16
11. Transparency of the WASH committee.....	19
12. Monitoring and assessment of committee's performance.....	19
13. Lessons Learnt .....	24
References.....	25



## Abbreviations

AGM	Annual General Meeting
CBO	Community based organization
CFW	Cash for Work
CLTS	Community-led Total Sanitation
INGO	International non governmental organization
LCC	life-cycle costs
NGO	Non governmental organization
PHAST	Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation
TOR	Terms of references
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene
WASH c.	Water, sanitation and hygiene committee



## O. Introduction

arche noVa's goal is to provide sustainable water, WASH services in the rural areas and thus break the cycle of unsanitary latrines, contaminated water and unsafe hygiene practices, as well as ensure sustainability of WASH services. In order to obtain participation, ownership and sustainability of the projects by the community in the long term, the core is to involve the community from the beginning and to establish a WASH committee at the project scheme. The WASH committee is a representative group of community members, either elected or appointed by the community, which is responsible for operation and maintenance of the WASH facilities as well as other issues that are related to the scheme.

This document highlights key issue areas, which need to be considered in building up and establishing WASH committees. However, it has to be stressed that WASH committees are varied and dynamic and thus it is not possible to cover all aspects of WASH committees in every context. The reader is invited to use the document as a basis for further more detailed analysis at the respective level.

This document also introduces an assessment and monitoring tool for the performance of WASH committees. The tool monitors and evaluates over a period of time whether the WASH committee is able and equipped with necessary skills and knowledge to carry out their duties and responsibilities. The system also measures the performances of the committee with detailed indicators.

Introducing WASH facilities and community committees that are responsible for the schemes and thereby launching a system that needs a "cooperative culture" requires that political, economical, social and cultural conditions should correspond with this approach. If the environment is lacking these conducive preconditions it means that project activities should - beyond providing technical skills to maintain WASH facilities - support strategies across behaviour and social changes for meaningful change to take place. This might include addressing certain (harmful) cultural practices, societal norms and structural inequalities. While behaviour change tends to address knowledge, attitudes and practices of individuals, social change is understood as a process of transformation in the way society is organised and in the distributions of power within various social and political institutions. As much as this point is vital for any sustainable project it has to be emphasised and kept in mind that behaviour and social change is a long-term process.



## 1. Defining the purpose of a WASH committee

Operation and management of water facilities by communities themselves have been promoted for a long time. Since communities as a whole cannot manage WASH facilities, it requires a “management body”, a WASH or WATER committee that is responsible and accountable to the community. Several surveys and vast experience in the field have proven that a strong and committed WASH committee increases the effectiveness and durability of a WASH scheme. Yet, the practice has also shown that it is a huge and time consuming task to build up and establish a committee that is able and motivated to take up these tasks in the long run.

The tasks of a WASH committee can be divided into social management, technical management and financial management. It is about planning, organization, decision-making, co-ordination, control and monitoring.

A committee usually consists of community members carrying out various tasks on a voluntary basis. However, in some cases it might be necessary for part of the work, e.g. maintenance of the system, to hire a private entrepreneur.

In the beginning, when discussing the need and the structure of a WASH committee it is important to take existing structures into account, such as development committees, council of elders, chiefs or village health committees. This will avoid duplication of activities and make use of existing structures.

## 2. Social Mobilization of the Community

Social or community mobilization is as a process of engaging, motivating and empowering local communities and vulnerable groups to raise awareness of and demand for a particular development objective through face-to-face dialogue. However, social mobilization involves not only people in the community, but all sectors and levels of society as well as service delivery agencies.

Social mobilization seeks to facilitate change through several stakeholders and aims at

- Strengthening the problem-solving capabilities of communities and individuals
- Encouraging them to sustainably use their resources
- Receiving information about the needs in the community (baseline survey)
- Improving the ability of the people to act and the knowledge how to act
- Making people aware of their own potential
- Enhancing people's creativity and productivity
- Establishing constructive dialogue and working relationships between local communities and service providers (government, NGOs, private sectors).
- Enhancing local governance
- Making community members understand the role that they have in the transformation process of their own community



These aims of social mobilization adapted in the context of providing water and sanitation facilities mean:

- To make people aware of the problems that result from not existing or insufficient water and sanitation schemes and to participate in finding solutions
- To increase the awareness of communities of the benefits of water and sanitation improvements
- To promote affordable and appropriate technology with an emphasis on sustainable facilities that can be managed, maintained and repaired by the community
- To encourage the community to set up a permanent structure in form of a committee to operate and maintain the schemes
- To mobilize financial resources to build and/or maintain the facilities
- To build alliances with potential partners – such as political leaders, local governments, NGOs, local leaders etc.



Sri Lanka: PHAST workshop with village community.

Community mobilization is fundamental for a people-centered development process. It promotes the involvement of people in decisions and action taken at village level and encourages self-initiatives, self-organization and willingness to contribute – passive recipients become active partners in development.

In the area of water and sanitation, the PHAST (Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation) approach<sup>1</sup> or the Community-

led Total Sanitation<sup>2</sup> (CLTS) are participatory methodologies for mobilizing communities. The PHAST approach is designed to promote hygiene behaviors, sanitation improvements and community management of water and sanitation facilities using specifically developed participatory techniques. Community-led Total Sanitation (CLTS) is a methodology for mobilizing communities to eliminate open defecation. Communities are facilitated to conduct their own appraisal and analysis of open defecation and take their own action to



Myanmar: Community mapping as part of PHAST workshop.

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.who.int/water\\_sanitation\\_health/hygiene/envsan/phastep/en/](http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/hygiene/envsan/phastep/en/)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.communityledtotalsanitation.org/>



become open defecation free.

Social mobilization planning and methodologies must consider context and circumstances of its activities. For example, community mobilization in times of crises or (post-) conflicts is distinctly different from peaceful areas. People do not know what will happen the next day and thus, uncertainty and fear makes people reluctant to invest in the longer future.

### 3. Composition of the WASH committees

While the number of WASH committee members may vary according to the size of the scheme the structure of the committee should be in line with the governing body of any CBO: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Furthermore there are 2 hygiene/health promoters and 2 technical support staff. The members of the WASH committee may be designated by election or appointment by the community or a combination of the two. Age, status, state of maturity, capacities as well as capability/skills of the committee member should be in line with the respective position. Therefore it is imperative that before designation there is clarity on tasks and responsibilities involved in being a WASH committee member.

Moreover, if a committee is going to function smoothly and meet the needs of the community it represents, the committee should correspond to all segments of the community, better off and poor, men and women, groups living in different areas and disadvantaged groups. In particular, the participation of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups in the committee will ensure that their perspectives and needs are included in management decisions. Making the selection of committee members an elaborate process may cause, but also prevent predicaments. Those offering to become a member might be offended if they are not selected, whereas less powerful community members may be pleased about the chances given to them. Therefore it is vital to stimulate openness and transparency about the selection process right from the beginning.



The involvement of women is highly recommended, at least to the level of gender balance. Experience and evaluations have shown that women are often more committed and responsible towards a participation in a committee. However, there are societies where gender relations tend to be highly unequal, and men usually strongly dominate mixed groups. In this situation, it might be considered that women-only WASH committees are set up assisted by separate advisory committees consisting of men.

WASH committees are mostly voluntary institutions given that the time required for the responsibilities can be provided from each member within their free time. Voluntary work means that there is no payment involved as a motivation to join the WASH committee. However, it might be agreed with the community to reimburse allowance for expenditure, such a cost for transport.



Thus, the key element of taking over responsibilities in a WASH community is commitment. Often it is experienced that in the beginning of a project commitment for the WASH facilities is built up by talking about the need of a committee and describing the potential advantages. However, frequently committee members are leaving the committee within a short time or the committee as a whole is not functioning well anymore.

For the committee members (as well as the community as a whole) to develop and sustain commitment the following is needed:

- The WASH facility is wanted and needed by the community
- A felt need for a sound management of the WASH system
- The feeling that it is feasible to achieve the set objectives
- The feeling that the time, effort and money invested makes a meaningful contribution for the development of the community and is acknowledged by the community
- Some committee members will experience the membership in a committee as a chance to built up capacity and skills and take over responsibilities

#### 4. Defining the functions and responsibilities of the WASH committee members

In the following the functions and responsibilities of WASH committee members are listed. Note that this list is not exhaustive and responsibilities differ according to context.

<b>President:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Call committee members for meetings and assemblies</li> <li>○ Prepare the agenda for the meetings in concordance with the other members</li> <li>○ Chair meetings and assemblies</li> <li>○ Coordinate and supervise the tasks which are under other members responsibility</li> <li>○ Sign, jointly with secretary, all documents related to the projects</li> <li>○ Sign, jointly with the treasurer, all financial transactions</li> <li>○ Represent the committee and community members in public activities</li> <li>○ Authorize, jointly with other members, all activities, purchases and expenses related to the project, reporting this regularly to the community</li> <li>○ Ensure the accomplishment of the rules, regulations and internal agreements within the committee</li> <li>○ Being kind and polite with other members of the committee giving them the opportunity to express themselves</li> <li>○ Find out answers to: What to do? Why to do it? When to do it? Where and how to do it? Who and with what to do it?</li> <li>○ Call and prepare the Annual General Meeting (AGM)</li> <li>○ Prepare the annual election of WASH committee members that is part of the AGM</li> </ul>
<b>Vice-President:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Assist to the President in his/her functions</li> <li>○ Support in preparing the agenda for meetings</li> <li>○ Facilitate the discussion of themes in the meeting</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In absence of the President assume his/her functions</li> <li>○ Facilitate and support finding out answers: What to do? Why to do it? When to do it? Where and how to do it? Who and with what to do it?</li> </ul>
<b>Secretary:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Prepare, jointly with the President, the agenda for the meetings</li> <li>○ Convoke, jointly with the President, the General Assemblies</li> <li>○ Write the minutes of each meeting</li> <li>○ Filing of all documentation related to the committee and assemblies such as requests, certifications, licenses, letters, etc.</li> <li>○ Respond all documentations when necessary</li> <li>○ Register of all correspondence and documents, attendances and minutes</li> <li>○ Support in others secretarial tasks</li> </ul>
<b>Vice Secretary:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Assist to the secretary in her/his functions</li> <li>○ In absence of the Secretary assume her/his function</li> </ul>
<b>Treasurer:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Collecting funds, fees and other income sources and deliver receipts for the money received</li> <li>○ Financial control</li> <li>○ Custody of funds and all property of the project sharing responsibility with the President and the Secretary</li> <li>○ Responsible for the accounting book and managing the cash book</li> <li>○ Maintain funds available to implement the activities and managing petty cash</li> <li>○ Filing of all account documents and correspondence such as: checks, invoices, receipts</li> <li>○ In charge of purchases when necessary</li> <li>○ To set up financial reports and presenting them to the committee and the community</li> <li>○ Sign, jointly with the president, all financial transaction</li> <li>○ Preparing a financial report on a monthly basis for the board (and if necessary to local authorities)</li> </ul>
<b>Health and Hygiene Promoter:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Home visits to community members on a regular basis</li> <li>○ In schools: facilitating the students to improve personal hygiene</li> <li>○ Conducting common awareness programs with help of people from respective local authorities</li> <li>○ Reporting of hygiene activities to the board</li> </ul>
<b>Technical Support Staff (at least 2):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Operating of WASH facilities (e.g. water pump)</li> <li>○ Carrying out minor repairs</li> <li>○ Responsible that major repairs are done (contact local authorities, a workshop, arrange transport etc.)</li> <li>○ Reporting of operating and maintenance activities to the board</li> </ul>

Roles and responsibilities of the members are written down in the constitution/statute. It is also recommended that, in case of non-compliances to responsibilities and rules, regulations or even sanctions are agreed on and written down.



## 5. Role and responsibilities of the WASH committee

The main responsibility of the WASH committee is to manage, control, maintain and ensure the sustainability of the WASH facilities. However, the detailed tasks differ from one project to another. In the following, the common responsibilities that apply to most of the committees are listed:

<b>1. Operation of WASH facilities/monitoring of usage</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Operating the facilities during service hours</li> <li>- Set up and adhere to an operation plan</li> <li>- Cleaning the facilities</li> <li>- Ensure that the facilities are functioning (e.g. filling up tanks during rainy season)</li> <li>- Ensure the security of the WASH facilities against vandalism, misuse, and damage from animals</li> <li>- Water is used efficiently</li> </ul>
<b>2. Maintenance of WASH facilities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Set up a maintenance plan</li> <li>- Regular servicing/overhaul of the facilities</li> <li>- Change of fittings and (minor) repairs</li> <li>- Cleaning the facilities</li> </ul>
<b>3. Controlling of WASH facilities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regular check-ups (according to a checklist)</li> </ul>
<b>4. Management tasks</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Set up a statute/constitution for the committee</li> <li>- Regular meetings</li> <li>- Report writing (minutes and reports to authorities)</li> <li>- Handling and control finance, proper book keeping</li> <li>- Fundraising activities</li> <li>- Collecting fees and contributions</li> <li>- Attending all trainings</li> <li>- Representing the community in all matters related to WASH facilities</li> <li>- Holding a AGM whereby the WASH committee accounts for its activities from the last year and informs of the envisaged activities in the coming year</li> <li>- Preparing election of the WASH committee members in the AGM</li> </ul>



### 5. Sustainability of WASH facilities

- Cooperation with local authorities and other stakeholders to sustain and extent the facilities
- Mobilization of community member to participate in WASH activities
- Identify issues that require action
- Maintain a frequently communication with the community members to inform them about WASH issues and provide a platform to express their concerns
- Resolve the problems related to WASH activities and facilities

### 6. Health and hygiene promotion activities

- Conduct health awareness training for the community
- Conduct health awareness and promotion training in schools
- Home visits and In schools: Observation of children's personal hygiene and health care

### 7. Formulating support requirements and dealing with private entrepreneurs

In case of a repair of a breakdown that goes beyond the capacity of the technical staff from the committee outside support might be needed.

- Identify and formulate exactly the type of support that is needed and how much the community is prepared to pay
- Invite various entrepreneurs to submit a tender/quotation
- Select the best proposal and set up a contract
- Ensure that monitoring and evaluation of the work is arranged according to the quality indicators formulated in the contract
- If necessary, formulate and submitting requests for assistance to donors or local authorities

## 6. Role and responsibilities of the Community

It is important that the community recognizes its responsibilities for the successful implementation, sustainability and potential extension of the facilities. This will be achieved only if the members of the community actively participate in the project and take over their responsibilities, such as:

- Make agreed payments for the WASH service in time
- Elect periodically the committee members according to regulations
- Participate in the meetings to discuss matters related to the community
- Participate in community work/casual work in order to built or maintain facilities
- Handle with care all property and installations which belong to the community
- Attend meetings and all educational activities related to community well-being





If there will be new water supply facilities established in the community is the first step a campaign by mobilizing the village and helping them to make decisions about the type of system of water supply by the people themselves, according to the conditions. The important tool for construction work is beneficiary-based construction by "Cash for work". The knowledge about the preferred water supply system will be transferred to the villagers, reinforce the sense of ownership and improve the income of the users.

## 7. Role and responsibilities of the Local NGO

It is highly advisable to involve a local NGO when WASH committees are established. As the local NGO is familiar with structures, cultural practices and needs on the ground it facilitates the whole process. The local partner should be involved in the entire procedure from social mobilization until the phasing out of external help. The roles and responsibilities in detail are:

- Facilitate the social mobilization
- Co-moderation or facilitation the PHAST workshops
- Advisor for the process of establishing the WASH committee
- Support of election process for WASH committees members
- Attending all WASH committee meetings in the beginning
- Conducting the trainings or, if another consultant is hired, attending the trainings
- Monitoring of WASH committee's activities
- Reporting regularly on progress, failure and difficulties of WASH committees in a structured report format
- Support the networking activities with local authorities and other stakeholders
- Organize activities beyond trainings, such as hygiene competitions, exposure visits etc.



- Handling funds in case there is money transfer to the WASH committees
- Support and initiate hygiene promotion activities
- Mediator and moderator between WASH committees
- Prepare the phasing out of external help in a structured manner

## 8. Formal organization/legal status of the WASH committee

Legal arrangements such as a registration as a community based organization (CBO) should be put in place. It emphasizes the long-term structure and seriousness of the organization to its members and the community. Moreover, the need for a registration as a formal organization derives from:

- Committees require recognition and a legitimate authority to perform their task such as setting up rules and regulations for using WASH facilities, collecting financial contributions, solve water facility disputes and to liaise with local governments.
- A legal status is needed to open a bank account or enter into contractual arrangements.
- Being a legal entity, the water committee can access loans from a bank, apply for funds from other donors and receive trainings from governmental authorities that are only for CBOs
- A legal status often increases people's trust in the committee since it is bound by regulations to perform and account in a certain way.
- A legal status improves or is precondition for recognising the Wash Committees by local authorities or political representatives

## 9. Capacity building of WASH committees

The project's success will depend on the capacity of the community and in particular the capacity of the WASH committee to operate, manage and maintain the facilities themselves, articulate their needs, make democratic decisions and handle conflicts. This requires managerial, social and technical skills that, very often, must be imparted through capacity building. The capacity building measures and trainings have to be chosen individually according to particular needs and previous knowledge. Yet, the basic and most common trainings for the WASH committee members are:

<b>CBO management training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Definition of CBO and its importance</li> <li>- Formation of CBO and organization development process</li> <li>- CBO constitution and registration of CBO</li> <li>- Responsibility of the CBO and the process of its sustainability</li> <li>- Participatory Approaches</li> <li>- Member roles and responsibilities</li> </ul>
--------------------------------	---



<b>Book keeping and accounts management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cash book</li> <li>- Financial reporting</li> <li>- Budget and budgetary control</li> <li>- Audit preparation</li> <li>- Transparency and accountability</li> </ul>
<b>Leadership training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Communication</li> <li>- Effective teamwork</li> <li>- Leadership styles/collaborative leadership</li> <li>- Conflict resolution</li> <li>- Human resource management</li> </ul>
<b>Social/community mobilization training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduction to Social Mobilization and principles of participatory development</li> <li>- Communication skills</li> <li>- Participatory planning</li> <li>- Gender sensitization</li> <li>- Community organization and local support organizations</li> </ul>
<b>Conflict resolution training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Providing the basic principles, skills and techniques used to analyze tensions and conflicts</li> <li>- Understanding the role of conflicts</li> <li>- Developing strategies to manage conflicts</li> <li>- Communication and negotiation skills</li> <li>- Provide skills and knowledge to tackle diverse issues, in particular related to WASH issues including: disputes over ownership and users rights, conflict over benefit sharing, lack of transparency.</li> </ul>
<b>Business development training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Income generating projects</li> <li>- Formulation of a business plan incl. feasibility study and market research</li> <li>- Marketing</li> <li>- Costing and pricing</li> <li>- Fundraising</li> <li>- Proposal writing</li> <li>- Set up business related networks and links</li> </ul>



<b>Health and hygiene promotion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- General hygiene</li> <li>- Personal hygiene (including menstrual hygiene)</li> <li>- Water borne diseases and how to prevent them</li> <li>- Solid waste management (household and community level)</li> <li>- Safe water and sanitation</li> </ul>
<b>Operation and maintenance of WASH technologies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hardware installation process</li> <li>- How to maintain the facilities</li> <li>- Repairing of the facilities</li> <li>- WASH committees or caretakers responsibilities</li> <li>- Life-cycle costs approach</li> </ul>



Apart from these trainings the following activities are recommended to further built up capacities:

→ *Exchange visits or exposure visits* . Exchange visits give the WASH committees the opportunity to pay a visit to another community that deals with similar problems. It facilitates small groups to have a structured look at issues of mutual interest and concern in another community. It also gives an insight of how other communities solve their problems. The main objectives are to exchange experiences on management issues, to get new ideas and to provide people with an opportunity to reflect on their problems while discussing them with outsiders.

→ *Networking activities*, such as attending meetings from other CBOs, NGOs

→ *Linkages to other external stakeholders*

## 10. Financing of the WASH Facilities

Failure to adequately cover the costs of maintenance for WASH facilities has been identified as a major constraint to achieving sustainability. Therefore, financial contributions from the users are indispensable. The life-cycle costs approach seeks to raise awareness of the importance of life-cycle costs (LCC) in achieving adequate, equitable and sustainable WASH services to make reliable cost



information readily available: When discussing the financing of the WASH schemes the following issues should be considered:

<b>Which costs must be covered?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Operation cost for the facilities (cleaning materials, salary for a caretaker, energy expenditures)</li> <li>- Running cost for the WASH committee</li> <li>- Expenditures for tools and spare parts</li> <li>- Loan repayment</li> <li>- Expenses for a system enlargement or system replacement (life cycle approach)</li> </ul>
<b>Which fundraising tools are available?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Contributions from consumers</li> <li>- Community taxes</li> <li>- Funds applied externally (NGOs, INGOs, Local Authorities)</li> <li>- Income Generating Projects of WASH committees</li> </ul>
<b>Which tariff is appropriate?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Flat rate for all households , irrespective of amount and services used</li> <li>- Flat rate per consumer, irrespective of amount and services used</li> <li>- Tariff per unit based on used water</li> <li>- Tariff that considers the financial background of users (wealthy people pay more than poor people)</li> </ul>
<b>When and how to collect contributions/fees?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Payments at the water point</li> <li>- Weekly, monthly to the treasurer</li> <li>- As and when it is required</li> <li>- During or after a productive activity (harvest)</li> <li>- Cash or kind (in form of labor contribution)</li> <li>- Unexpected costs should be discussed best at a time where people are expect to have money (after harvest, beginning of months)</li> <li>- Poor people do not generally have stable and steady incomes. Payment regulations should consider these special circumstances and promote flexible payment structures, such as paying in smaller amounts more frequently.</li> </ul>
<b>Handling the funds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Where to deposit the money</li> <li>- Receipts for accounting</li> <li>- Authority to withdraw money from the bank</li> </ul>
<b>How to handle non-payers or bad payers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Distinction between not willing or not able to pay.</li> <li>- Analyzing the causes and act on these causes: People who cannot afford the fee might pay in kind or labor or getting exempted from paying. Reasons for unwillingness to pay should be taken serious and be discussed.</li> <li>- Agree on sanctions</li> <li>- Raise awareness/mobilization of the community to promote</li> </ul>



	payment - Improve services
--	-------------------------------

The introduction of tariffs for water and sanitation supply services is highly recommended, not only for the covering the cost for operation and maintenance of facilities but also for the following reasons:

- Payments increase sense of value, commitment and ownership among users.
- Payments improve quality and standards of service.
- To discourage wasting water
- Fees can be used as a regulation tool, e.g. including costs of environmental protection and conservation.

**Amongst different possibilities of sourcing income for the WASH committee financing through user payment for services has been strongly promoted as a solution.**

However, no matter which tariff is chosen by the community or the WASH community it must be clearly communicated to all users about the way the tariff has been chosen. It must be also explained and clear to everyone that the fees are solely used for the WASH facilities and no private profit is gained. Users must have the feeling that the fee is adequate for the service they get and costs are minimized while maintaining quality of the facilities. Transparent and fair systems motivate people to contribute and invite them to participate in discussing fee structures.

In countries where water is free of charge people might be reluctant to pay for the service of WASH facilities. However, fees can be declared as contribution towards maintenance/repair for the facility, a salary for the caretaker of the side, or for the service and convenience of having clean water each time they open a tap.



Sri Lanka: Community gardening as an income generation project.

Income generating activities can be an additional funding source. There are many examples, how a community or a WASH committee can raise funds for their WASH facilities or other community developing projects. In the Business development training the conduction of brainstorming sessions with the WASH committee make them aware about funding possibilities with livelihood measures such as small re-sales business, re-packing, committee gardening or micro credit systems. To start those activities it is helpful to

support the committees with a called “Seed fund” after the development of a business plan. With this money first small investments especially into livelihood measures can be initiated to create a starting point. This can be to buy chilli, sugar etc. for re-packing and selling. In order to make sure that this money is not wasted or misused or lost the maturity of the WASH Committee the seed-funds are given in the form of instalments after the financial training and the business development



training, if there is a strong motivation visible to seriously start small businesses and proper initiative taken also by the villagers.

### **11. Transparency of the WASH committee**

Financial management and transparency are among the sensitive aspects of community management. Some of the common problems are

- Influential individuals are placed in positions of financial responsibility and run the project without accounting to the community
- Conflicts arises when individuals or groups wish to gain access to the funds by using their power in the community
- Members of the committee who are trained in financial matters leave the committee
- Lack of clarity about how much money is spent

The WASH committee should keep the larger community informed and the community should be able to keep itself informed on all matters related to WASH facilities. This is in particular essential on financial issues: How tariffs are set up and how the financial contributions are used. Various ways exist to create such transparency. A WASH committee needs a clear structure, policy and control system to ensure that funds are correctly collected, recorded, used and accounted for. Every member of the board and the community must have the right to know the details of all transactions. It is needed that the committee draws up a budget of what expenditures may take place and when payments are required. A budget also calculates the expected income for a set period of time. It lists also down when it expects to receive the income. Once a budget is in place, the WASH committee needs to keep record of all payments moving into and out of the WASH committee. Basic bookkeeping techniques (cash book and receipt book) are required to record and monitor the financial transactions. Keeping track of where money is going is an essential part of ensuring that it is being used properly. For transparency on financial issues, knowledge of bookkeeping and accounting is essential. If the members of the committee have only little or no experience with accounting, trainings should be provided. Such training may include also matters such as tariff setting, user registration, and auditing.

Transparency is about sharing information with and submitting financial reports to the community. It also allows community members to ask questions about the figures and how the budget is to be used. Organizing community meetings on a regular basis should be held to report on income and expenditures over the reporting period. How often these meetings take place depends of the size of the project but at least this financial reporting takes place at the Annual General Meeting.

### **12. Monitoring and assessment of committee's performance**

The above mentioned issues that are to be considered when establishing WASH committees have shown that proper functioning of WASH committees is an essential element for the sustainability of WASH facilities. WASH committee members must receive trainings in order to be equipped with skills, knowledge and resources to carry out the responsibilities and tasks mentioned before. Building



up skills, knowledge and accountability of the committees is a process and should be monitored closely.

This section presents a tool whereby the committee's ability to perform and the results of their performance can be monitored and evaluated. The assessment is carried out over a period of time and thus it is not static but rather keeps track of developments and drawbacks. The following is only a short introduction of the tool. The monitoring system is set up in excel format.

**Step 1 Definition of Indicators:** According to agreed roles and responsibilities of the WASH committee and its members indicators are to be developed. These indicators should be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound).

**Step 2 Weighting the Indicators:** In order to weight the indicators, each indicator will be compared to each other indicator by a pair wise comparison (see Table 1). Weighting of indicators has to be done for each project since the importances of the indicators vary according to the project context.

**Step 3 Marking the performance:** On a regular basis (recommended monthly), the performance of the WASH committee is assessed according to the indicators. A very good performance gets 4 points, good performance 3 points, satisfying performance 2 points and insufficient performance 1 point. The points are multiplied then by the respective weight factor (see Table 2)



### Monitoring system for performances of WASH committees – Weighting of indicators (Table 1)

The first step is to weight the indicators by pair wise comparison. For weighting the indicators, every indicator will be compared to each other. The marking can be either: the indicator is more important (3), as important as the other indicator (2), less important (1). The total of the weighting is 100 %. The weighting of the indicator results from: Total of each indicator will be put in relation to the total of weighting.

Ind.	1.1.	1.2.	1.3.	2.1.	2.2.	3.1.	3.2.	3.3.	3.4.	4.1.	4.1.1.	4.1.2.	4.2.	4.2.1.	4.2.2.	...all other indicators	9.3.	Total of row	Weighting
1.1.		1	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	1		1	79	2,21
1.2.	3		2	2	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	2	2	2		3	135	3,78
1.3.	3	2		2	3	2	3	2	3	3	2	3	3	2	2		3	129	3,61
2.1.	2	2	2		3	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	1		2	130	3,64
2.2.	2	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1		2	78	2,18
3.1.	2	2	2	2	3		2	2	3	1	1	2	1	1	1		2	105	2,94
3.2.	2	2	1	2	3	2		2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1		1	88	2,46
3.3.	3	2	2	2	3	2	2		2	2	1	2	1	1	1		2	88	2,46
3.4.	2	2	1	2	3	1	3	2		2	1	2	1	1	1		1	80	2,24
4.1.	2	1	1	1	2	3	2	2	2		1	1	1	1	1		1	69	1,93
4.1.1.	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3		3	3	1	1		2	126	3,53
4.1.2.	2	1	1	2	3	2	3	2	2	3	1		2	1	1		2	87	2,43
4.2.	3	2	1	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	2		1	1		1	85	2,38
4.2.1.	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3		2		2	131	3,67
4.2.2.	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2			2	126	3,53
...all other indicators																			
9.3.	3	1	1	2	2	2	3	2	3	3	2	2	3	2	2			115	3,22
																		3574	100,00

**Note: Weighting has to be done individually for each project/programme!**



**Assessment and Monitoring of WASH committees (Table 2)**

	Aspect of Assessment	Indicators	Weight Factor	Points per month	Weighted points
1.	Formation of WASH committee	1.1. Members of WASH c. attended social mobilization meeting (like PHAST training)			
		1.2. Members of WASH c. were appointed or elected by the community			
		1.3. Composition of WASH c. represent the community (at least 50 % women)			
2.	Efficiency of management of the WASH committee	2.1. WASH c. members carry out their tasks and responsibilities according to agreed TORs			
		2.2. Involvement, participation and information of other stakeholders (authorities, village leaders) in meetings, by reporting			
3.	Efficiency of regular meetings of the WASH committee	3.1. Regular meetings (at least once per months) and attendance of all members			
		3.2. Participation in meetings: Have issues being discussed by all?			
		3.3. Have discussion lead to decisions? Action plan set up?			
		3.4. Minutes of meeting are written			
4.	Capacity building of WASH committees - training provided to the members	4.1. CBO Management training: attendance of all members?			
		4.1.1. <i>Constitution/Statute/TOR formulated</i>			
		4.1.2. <i>Weekly, monthly, annual plan set up</i>			
		4.2. Finance/Book keeping training: attendance of all members			
		4.2.1. <i>Proper book-keeping and in time done</i>			
		4.2.2. <i>Cashbook and bank account in place</i>			
		4.2.3. <i>The board is regular updated and informed about financial matters/decisions</i>			
		4.3. Leadership training: attendance of all members			
		4.3.1. <i>Active involvement/participation of all members in discussion and decisions?</i>			
		4.3.2. <i>Decisions are made in a democratic way</i>			
		4.3.3. <i>Networking/liasion with other stakeholders</i>			
		4.4. Mobilisation training: attendance of all members			
		4.4.1. <i>Unity and team spirit of community is increasing</i>			
		4.4.2. <i>Volunteer support and activities have increased</i>			



	Aspect of Assessment	Indicators	Weight Factor	Points per month (....12 columes)	Weighted points
		4.5. Business Development training: attendance of all members <i>4.5.1. Proposal for income generating projects are developed</i>			
		<i>4.5.2. Linkages to other business related service providers established.</i>			
		4.6. Hygiene training: attendance of all members <i>4.6.1. Are home visits regularly conducted?</i>			
		<i>4.6.2. Improved hygiene behavior of community members</i>			
		<i>4.6.3. Improved cleanness of environment in community</i>			
		4.8. Conflict management skills: attendance of all members <i>4.8.1. Are conflicts discussed openly?</i>			
5.	Administration matters in place?	5.1. Registration done			
		5.2. Bank account opened			
		5.3. Stationery (paper, stamp, pens) available			
6.	Maintenance of WASH facilities	6.1. Regular technical checkups of WASH facilities in villages according to checklists			
		6.2. Daily checkups of WASH facilities in schools (clean and functioning?)			
		6.3. Daily cleaning of WASH facilities in schools			
		6.4. Repairs have been done in time (< 3 days)			
		6.5. Consumables, spare parts and tools for maintenance are in stock			
		6.6. Water test are conducted			
		6.7. Water level checked			
7.	Financing of WASH facilities	7.1. User fees are collected on a regular basis from all users/beneficiaries			
		7.2. Member fees are collected regular (at least 90 % of the households paying regularly)			
		7.3. Transparency of fees is given and regular accounted for to community			
8.	Income generating projects	8.1. Business activities undertaking			
		8.2. Bookeeping properly done			
		8.3. Profit shared according to TOR			
9.	Phasing out of the monitoring organization	9.1. Building up linkages with other stakeholders (authorities, parents)			
		9.2. Taking up own initiatives to maintain or extend WASH facilities			
		9.3. Contact with District Water Supply Office (at least 4 times per year)			



### 13. Lessons Learnt

Based on the experience of the 2 year project “Participatory Improvement of water supply sanitation and Hygiene Situation in Resettlement Areas (PIWASHRA)” in Sri Lanka some experiences and recommendations are sketched:

- The establishment of WASH committees should commence as soon as possible. Even if construction work of WASH facilities can be done within 3 months or less, the establishment of WASH committees needs more time and should be planned accordingly.
- The composition of the WASH committee members is very important and should be carefully done in order to avoid that members leave the committee soon. Change of members after a short time reduces the capacity of the committee and requires extra effort or training to introduce new members into the system. The main questions for the selection of members are: who is capable and eligible of taking over responsibility and who is intrinsic motivated to carry out the duties?
- The finance of operation and maintenance of the WASH facilities should be budgeted in detail and in writing. It must be transparent and communicated to the community.
- Trainings are often too short in duration – it cannot be expected that issues will be understood in one day trainings. This is even more significant for trainings that aim at behavior changes.
- Trainings should be held in a way that is adequate to their previous knowledge and experience. It has been observed that trainings are too theoretical
- Cash for work activities have to be carefully planned in terms of the volume of the money (do not overflow villages) and the selection of beneficiaries. There is a risk when CFW activities are carried out at the same time as establishing WASH committees that people will take up roles in the WASH committee because they expect material gains from it.
- Hygiene competition has been proven to be a very good motivation tool in order to promote positive behavior changes.
- Schools, parent-teacher cooperation and children themselves are powerful tools in promoting changed behaviors and greater awareness of hygiene issues.



## References

American Red Cross, Technical Unit Water and Sanitation, Village Water and Sanitation Committee Strengthen, June 2002.

Community Mobilisation, Principles and Practices. Publisher: GTZ and Integrated Food Security Programme, Sri Lanka, May 2003

Keep it working, A field manual to support community management of rural water supplies. IRC Technical Paper Series 36; August 2001. [www.irc.nl](http://www.irc.nl)

Water Supplies Managed by Rural Communities. Country reports and case studies from Cameroon, Colombia, Guatemala, Kenya, Nepal and Pakistan. IRC Project and Programme Papers 5-E. [www.irc.nl](http://www.irc.nl)





# Water. Future. Life.

Humanitarian Aid and Cooperative Development  
Education Development

We work with local partners.

We transfer our expertise to the people.

We strengthen self-help capabilities.

arche noVa – Initiative for people in need  
Weißeritzstraße 3  
01067 Dresden  
Germany

[www.arche-nova.org](http://www.arche-nova.org)



**arche noVa**  
Initiative for People in Need