COMMUNITY MONITORING

IN WATER AND SANITATION PROJECTS

A
FACILITATORS
MANUAL

PRIA

Contents

Preface

Preface

Community Monitoring in Water and Sanitation Projects: A Facilitators Manual aims at creating a basic understanding of the concept, principles and steps of community monitoring. This manual is based on the work that I was personally involved from PRIA in facilitating a process of social development monitoring in Dharali village, Uttarkashi district of Uttaranchal (India). The other project that inspired me and gave me a broad-based understanding of community monitoring occurred during an assignment supported by DFID and UNICEF and jointly undertaken by IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre, Netherlands and PRIA, Delhi, India for guiding the process of developing models for community monitoring, linked to community action, for child survival and development in the six project sites in India. Field visits under this project in Rajasthan, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh in UNICEF project sites in 2001 helped enormously in the preparation of this manual and also assisted in facilitating the process of social development monitoring in Uttaranchal in the same year.

This manual is divided into three key sections. The first section on the **Meaning of community monitoring** deals with the conceptual understanding of monitoring and community monitoring and why it is important to involve communities in monitoring the projects.

The second section highlights the **Key steps involved in community monitoring** which also includes experiences generated from facilitating social development monitoring in Dharali village in Uttarkashi district. Each step provides some useful tips for facilitators who wish to aid community monitoring. The third and last section highlights the **Key principles**, which one should keep in mind while facilitating community monitoring.

This manual has been possible through the support of various people. Dr. Rajesh Tandon, President of PRIA has been a constant guiding force. I owe thanks to Kathleen Shordt and Christine Van Wijk of IRC, Netherlands for their guidance and support during the field interventions of the assignment for UNICEF and DFID. Their vast experiences in the field of Water and Sanitation contributed in sharpening my own understanding of the concept of community monitoring. IRC materials have been used in this manual as well as those that have been acknowledged, in addition to other materials that were made available by UNICEF and DFID. The materials produced during the assignment on developing models for community monitoring have also been used in this manual. I would like to

Though this manual has been written using the experiences of the water and sanitation sector, yet the principles, concepts and steps can be applied to other sectors as well. This manual will be useful for practitioners who wish to broaden their understanding of community monitoring, for trainers who want to learn as well as impart the training to others on participatory monitoring.

Anju Dwivedi
PRIA
December 2002

Meaning of Community Monitoring

The term 'monitoring' has been present in the development discourse for a long time. The development projects and programs which are intended to benefit the people have integrated monitoring in all stages of the projects to bring about timely improvement in the projects/programmes by keeping a close track of the project.

It has been observed that there are many misconceptions surrounding the term 'monitoring'. It is generally associated with a body of skills and tools, which only 'experts' in the development sector seem to possess. These experts are the project managers or the programme managers of the government or the NGOs. The general impression is that the community is not experienced in handling a technical component like monitoring on its own since this requires special skills. This narrow view of monitoring stifles people's active contribution in solving their own problems, it is very important to demystify this view of monitoring if people's participation has to be ensured in projects and programmes.

In fact, without being aware of it, everyone is engaged in monitoring all the time. A school going child will check that all her
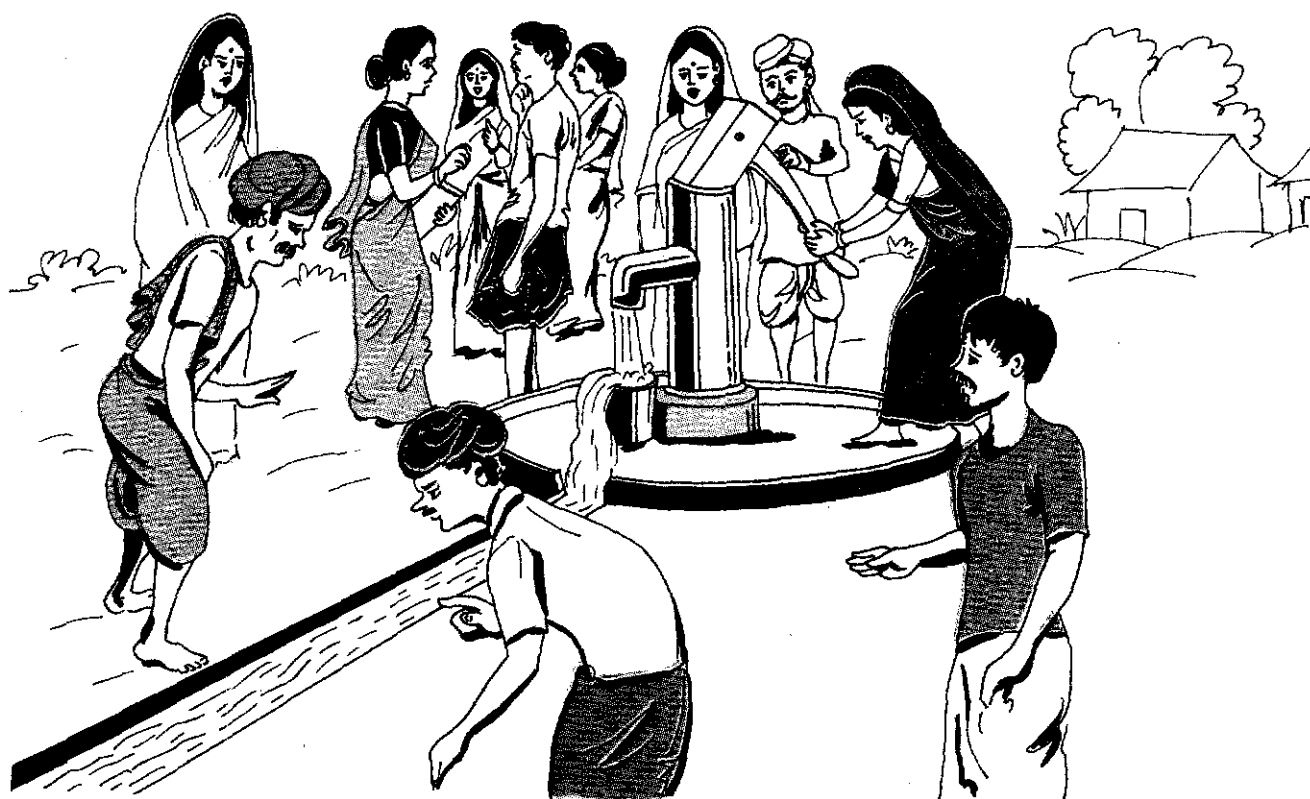
books and notebooks are placed in the school bag, her dress is appropriate for the day, or that her shoe laces are tied. The parents may also be interested in checking that the uniform the child wears for the day is clean, the buttons are in place, her shoes are polished and the child is carrying the books and notebooks according to the schedule of the day. If the child finds something wrong, she may fix the problem herself or may ask her parents to do so. This common example from day to day life debunks the concept and meaning of the term –monitoring- which does not require special skills but *interested actors* (in this case, the child and parents) and a *relevant issue* (preparation to go to school) to collect data about, carry out analysis and proper action.

All the actors/stakeholders are involved in monitoring the projects/programs. Communities too have been involved in maintaining their systems through consistent monitoring efforts. But their efforts remained unnoticed, since they failed to gain recognition in the 'monitoring systems' developed under projects.

Monitoring is defined as the checking, collecting and analysis of information about current project developments to improving implementation, performance and results. In essence it means comparing the actual situation and then taking action to bring reality and expectations together.[1]

Community monitoring is not very different in definition except that it lays emphasis on *involving the local community in the process of monitoring*. This includes the main actors – women and men, rich and poor, the old, youths and children from across the community and their local institutions (constitutional, like the Panchayati Raj institutions in the case of India and project initiated communities and traditional associations). Community monitoring also involves the personnel and institutions at

the block, district and state levels since the response leading to action has to come from these actors. Community monitoring makes these people accountable.[2]

Often, community monitoring is equated with community based monitoring. It is very important to understand the terms and the differences that accompany those terms. 'Community monitoring' as mentioned above, *includes communities* as important actors engaged in checking, collecting and analyzing the information. The 'Community based monitoring' is a very ambiguous term because it may not presuppose the inclusion of the community in monitoring since it indicates a system, which is located and based in the community. For instance, the maps of the households drawn during project designing may be painted on the walls of the village, marking the households having access to water points and latrines. During the implementation of the project, the map may show an increase in the number of households having access to water points and latrines. This issue of gaining access may be monitored by only NGOs or project implementing agencies that keep adding or painting those households on the map without any engagement of the community in collecting and analyzing data let alone taking any appropriate action.

This is a typical example of a community based monitoring system which is based in the village but the people who are involved in the collection and analysis of information are NGO personnel and not the community. So, community monitoring necessarily involves the members of the community in monitoring where the project is being/has

[1] Shordt, Kathleen (2000). *Action Monitoring for Effectiveness, Improving water, hygiene and environmental sanitation programmes (Part 1).* Technical Paper Series, IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre, Netherlands

[2] Shordt, Katheleen; Wijk, Christine van and Dwivedi, Anju (February 2002). *Community Monitoring: Sanitation, Water, Hygiene and Management Processes,* IRC and PRIA

been implemented with other possible actors at block, district and state level. Since the communities are not homogeneous (they differ from each other on the basis of caste, gender, religion, socio-economic conditions, political affiliations etc.), conflicting interests are therefore natural. Hence, it becomes necessary to *involve representatives of all groups and institutions in community monitoring*. To ensure that the poor and marginalized are represented, their voices are not only articulated but heard as well.

The project implementing agencies (NGOs and Government) have to realize that monitoring should lead to problem solving and if it remains confined to serving only decision making needs of a small management group, the purpose gets defeated, monitoring tends to become top down and less effective.

Action is an integral part of monitoring. Monitoring without action becomes reporting only. In many cases, the monitoring systems of project implementing agencies do reflect the same problem such as 'low women's participation in meetings' every quarter or six monthly, without any mention of what remedial steps are planned for the future to act upon or even if these were planned, what actions followed thereafter. This is an example of 'reporting' though people often feel that this is 'monitoring'. Imagine a situation where the issue of low participation of women in meetings is further explored to know the reasons and some action plans emerge which lead to some changes in the way meetings are conducted, this becomes an example of monitoring. Thus community monitoring is not merely the upward flow of information but taking action becomes a very important component.

WHY COMMUNITY MONITORING?

In participatory projects, involvement of people does not remain confined only to plan and design a project but to manage the project as well. The concept of community participation needs an extension to encompass 'people's involvement' in the monitoring process. Success in such projects can be seen if 'users' are aware of the nature of service, facilities and what is required to keep them functioning satisfactorily. User participation in designing and management is increasingly being recognized as a way to improve the systems and facilities for them to be used effectively.

The success of projects also depends on the government to provide institutional strengthening and support mechanisms to enable communities to take part in the planning and maintenance of the services.

Various opportunities exist in the environment related to decentralization for building and strengthening community monitoring in water and sanitation projects in India: [3]

1. **Related to environment:** The Government of India is committed to providing safe drinking water facilities to all non-covered and partially covered habitations in the rural areas. The national water policy has been guiding the formulation of policies and programmes for water resource development and its management since 1987. The national water policy of April 2002 has recognized the need for the provision of drinking water as a matter of primary consideration. This means that more projects of providing of drinking water will be initiated under the tenth plan as well focusing on the proper management of water resources. Good monitoring enables good management therefore effective systems of monitoring need to be set up in the drinking water projects for a proper and effective use of resources.

2. **Relevance to decentralization:** Monitoring figures in the new roles for community groups and Panchayati Raj (PR) institutions in the context of decentralization. The need for local monitoring is also highlighted in the guidelines of the Rajiv Gandhi Drinking Water Mission and the Total Sanitation Campaign.

The current ninth plan also includes ensuring participation of the communities at all stages of the project implementation in the management and maintenance of drinking water systems. The tenth plan suggests that the drinking water problem is very much a governance issue, it requires a bureaucracy committed to people's control over funds and programmes and effective monitoring. [4]

Effective monitoring procedures can lead to effective management within the projects where ordinary citizens take an active part in monitoring. For community monitoring it is not sufficient to focus only on the involvement of the Panchayat Raj Institutions or the Village Water and Sanitation Committees (VWSC). This is because some of the concerns about water and sanitation in the community relate to the conduct of these institutions. An example of this is transparency in the management of funds by the panchayat. Other community members may need to be involved in checking and taking action regarding this aspect.

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[3] ibid

[4] Planning Commission (September 2001). *Approach Paper to the tenth five-year plan (2002-2007)*. Government of India, New Delhi

SECTION II

Steps Involved in

3. **Greater demand for accountability in communities:** The panchayats and the local committees are handling water and sanitation issues more often. Community members and the staff at block and district levels are concerned about transparency and management of local funds. This implies a need for monitoring within the community.

4. **Gender and social equity:** Greater emphasis is being placed on the participation of women and the poor to enable them to avail of the improved services. The challenge, of course, is to realize not just the participation of women and poor people, but an equitable distribution — of work, responsibilities, rights, benefits and so on — between women and men, and between those worse and better-off. Improved monitoring can be one element in the approach to this important challenge.

Steps Involved in Community Monitoring[5]

Before community monitoring is initiated, it is important to create an environment where it is not seen as a threat, which implies:

(a) Developing an understanding of the meaning of monitoring, its aims and objectives in all the stakeholders.

(b) Help them to analyze how the actors are currently engaged in monitoring. What is their existing system? What data do they collect? How do they aggregate the information, analyse it and act on it? What are the current reporting mechanisms etc.? What can be done to improve the systems?

(c) Highlight their strengths and help them retain good practices while advocating change in practices, if so desired.

(d) Identify the people who are committed to supporting the initiative from amongst the NGOs and the government. While advocating more effective approaches in monitoring among leaders and senior staff, it would be sensible to begin with neutral and non-threatening issues. For example, it would be unwise to begin with the issue of corruption, even though it is an important one, as the people's fears and doubts have to be allayed first. To begin with neutral issues can help build the capacity first, and then gradually capacities can be directed to deal with instances of the abuse of power and finance.

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[5] Shordt, Kathleen (2000). *Action Monitoring for Effectiveness, Improving water, hygiene and environmental sanitation programmes (Part 1)*, Technical Paper Series, IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre, Netherlands

STEP 1
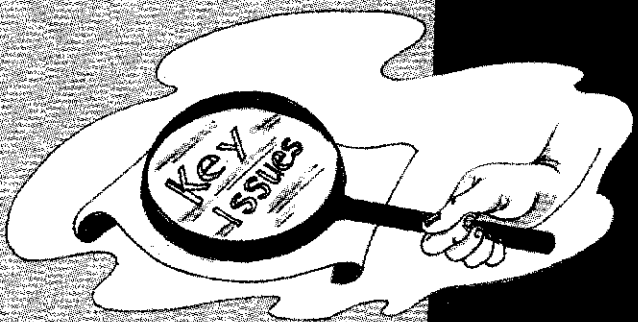
Identify key issues and problems or concerns

The monitoring focuses on problems and concerns and hence it is important to know what the issues or problems actually are through counseling or meeting various stakeholders involved in the project. It is regard to the issue (in this case 'water and sanitation') as well as the project. At the time of initiation, the project may be either at the initial stage or at the implementation stage or it may have been withdrawn
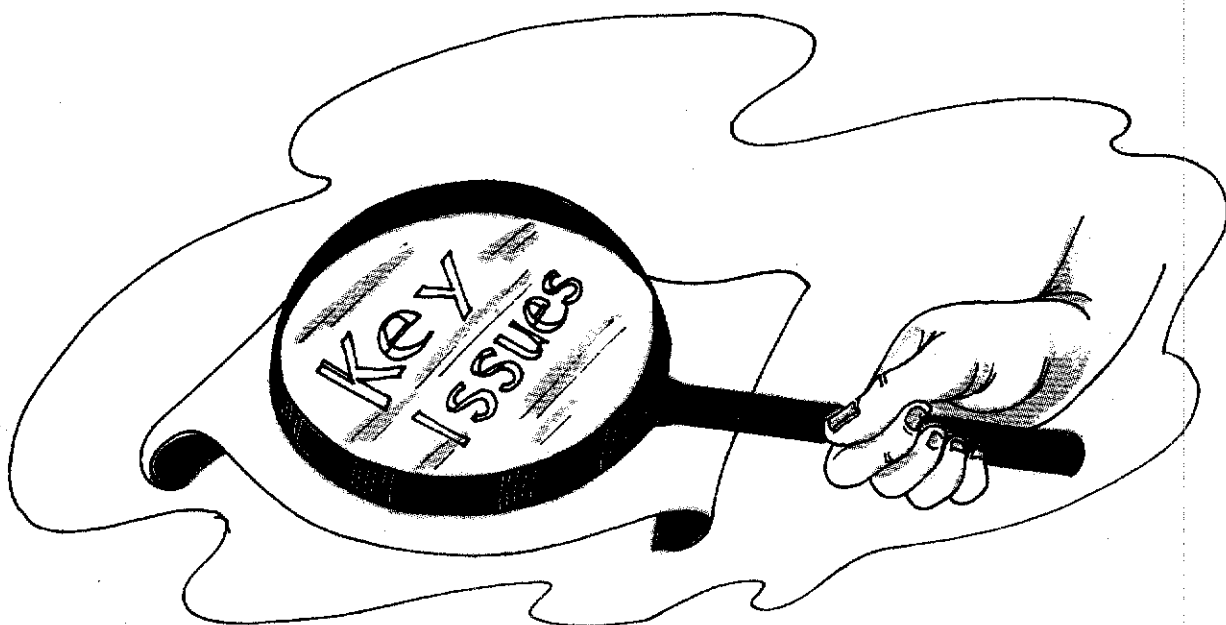
Taking this step will result in:

(a) A list of key concerns and problem issues. This also implies that consultations should be ongoing in

classes are not allowed to fetch water from community wells. It is unlikely that these households will benefit largely from the project as social ostracism will remain an issue or possibly even funding provided by the project

The monitoring focuses on problems and concerns and hence it is important to know what the issues or problems actually are through counseling or meeting various stakeholders involved in the project. It is essential to visit the communities with the projects and meeting them in separate groups (men, women, rich and poor), visiting the households of the poor and marginalized should be an important priority.

Consultations and meetings should occur separately with village water and sanitation committees, Panchayati Raj institutions and other institutions. Meetings are also advisable with various project managers of NGOs and the government who may be based locally, regionally or nationally as well as with field workers. Meetings with the members of key groups such as the local government women's groups, health personnel should also be considered.

In each case, the members should be asked about their concerns and problems with regard to the issue (in this case 'water and sanitation') as well as the project. At the time of initiation, the project may be either at the initial stage or at the implementation stage or it may have been withdrawn altogether. This implies that community monitoring can be initiated at any stage of the project.

It is not advisable to ask vague questions, such as 'What should be monitored?' A question that is specific is always more useful, such as, 'How is the project going? What are your concerns? Why are those concerns there? What other problems can you visualize encountering in the future?' One has to keep probing for the real issue, for instance if a community group (men and women) responds that their main concern is related to water that tastes bad the follow up questions could be, 'Which sources are you using? What is the color of the water? Any illness reported from the community?'
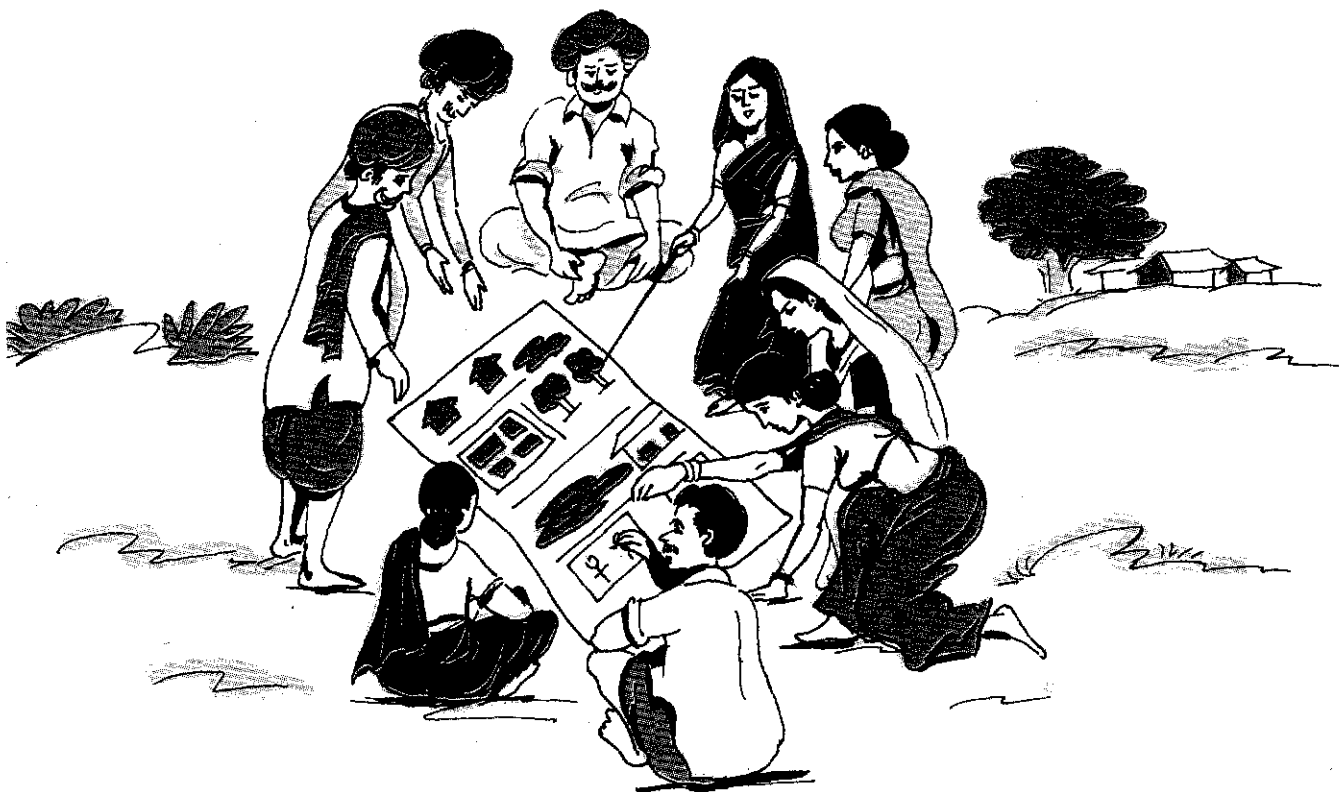
Taking this step will result in:

(a) A list of key concerns and problem issues. This also implies that consultations should be ongoing in the project cycle because the issues change at each stage.

(b) A list of those who are concerned or have a vested interest in the issue and can be involved in monitoring.

In addition to consultations and meetings some *participatory learning action methodologies* could be used. Social mapping exercises during project designing can lead to some concerns, problems that could be monitored. For instance, those households (poor), which have no access to latrines, or those households belonging to the socially backward classes are not allowed to fetch water from community wells. It is unlikely that these households will benefit largely from the project as social ostracism will remain an issue or possibly even funding provided by the project for the construction of latrines may not be sufficient for the households of the poor to be able to afford them.

Organizing workshops for various stake-holders at the district or state level can be another method for identifying issues or concerns. On the one hand, it can help in an exchange of information and learning in the immediate commitment for starting monitoring but has the disadvantage of missing out on the concerns of the poorer sections as they may not be able to participate in the meetings fully.[6]
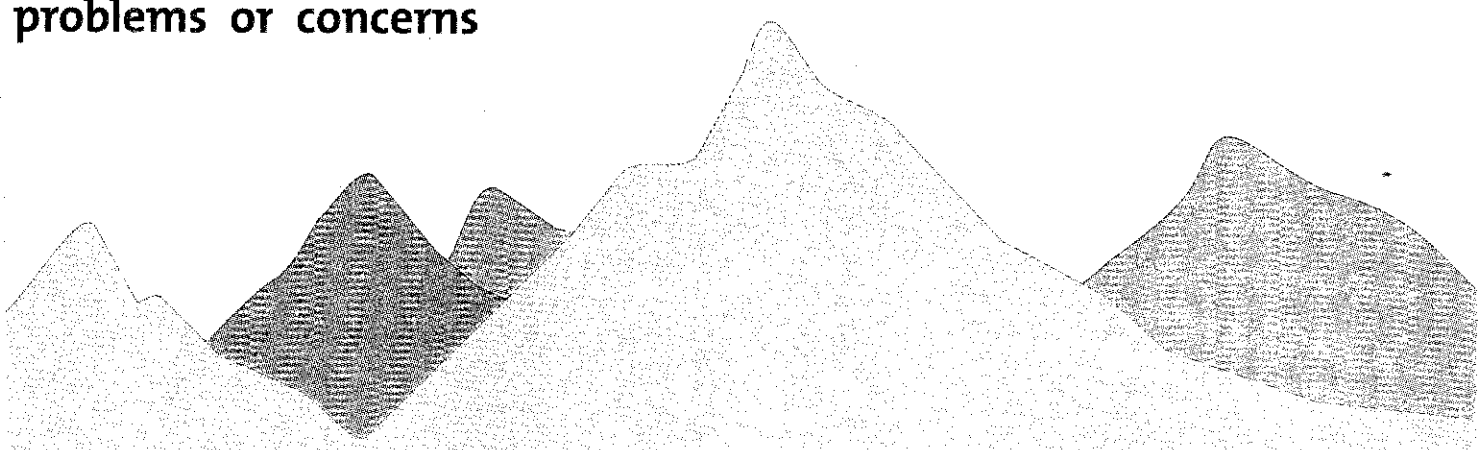
Tips for facilitators

❖ This step should be taken slowly, time should be given to the people to articulate their thoughts on the issue.

❖ Various representative groups in the community should be involved.

❖ Visits should be paid to those households that are in far away places and represent the marginalized community.

❖ During consultations, facilitate the process and keep probing. Ensure that everyone in the group is able to present his/her view.

❖ Do not allow 1 or 2 people dominate the discussion.

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[6] ibid

STEP I

Identify key issues and problems or concerns

A study by PRIA was undertaken in November 2000 on the effectiveness of village level institutions in Uttaranchal to facilitate a comparative analysis of the contexts and factors that contribute towards the effective functioning of these institutions. The village water and sanitation committee was one such committee studied. This study on VWSC was undertaken in two districts of Uttaranchal - Uttarkashi and Dehradun. The committee was developed under a project on water and sanitation called SWAJAL aided by the World Bank. The aim of the project was to[7]:

- Assist the GOUP (Government of Uttarpradesh) to identify and implement an appropriate policy framework to promote the long term sustainability of the Rural Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation sector

- Deliver sustainable health and hygiene benefits to the rural population through improvements in water supply and environmental sanitation

- Improve rural incomes through time saving and income earning opportunities for women

- Test alternatives to the current supply driven service delivery mechanism; and

- Promote sanitation and gender awareness.

For the implementation of the project, a rigorous planning stage was initiated. The village water and sanitation committee was formed which was an implementing unit at the village level. The other stakeholder groups involved in the project were- the District Project Management Unit (DPMU), a support organization (SO) as well as the communities.

The study of these committees revealed that effectiveness of village institutions (such as VWSC) depends on: good leadership, trust within the community members, better communication amongst the members and the communities, strong transparency and accountability measures and also harmonious relationships with other institutions present in the village.

The study and follow up visits led to various meetings and consultations in the VWSC, Panchayat leaders, women's groups and

[7] Department of Rural Development: *The Swajal Project, (UP Rural Water Supply and Environment Sanitation Project)*, India

men's groups. Meetings were conducted separately with the NGO staff and District Project Management units to know their concerns and issues related to the O & M phase of the project.

In the example selected, one village called Dharali (located in Uttrakashi district) had witnessed all the problems during the implementation of the SWAJAL project. When the study was initiated, the project on SWAJAL had ended and all the responsibilities of maintenance had fallen on the VWSC. Even while the project was on, the progress in the village had slowed down considerably owing to differences between the communities on the support of the project.

The opinions of DPMU and SO indicated the ineffectiveness of the project due to very little involvement of the communities in the project and the non-cooperative attitude of the village. The VWSC, the SO and PMU raised concerns over the lack of participation and support from the community, theft of pipes and parts of the stand posts were reported. The community on the other hand was upset about issues like non-transparency, lack of accountability, information gaps, lack of the capacities of VWSC and the pervading corruption.

STEP II
Building indicators on the issues identified
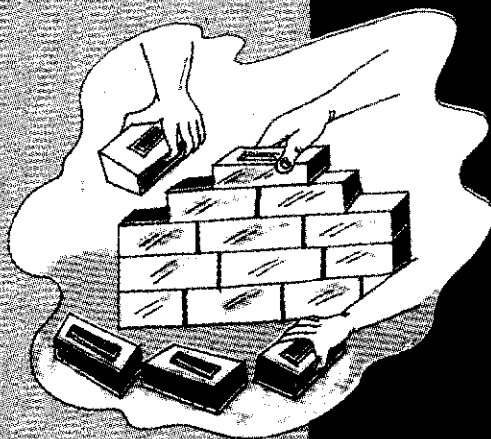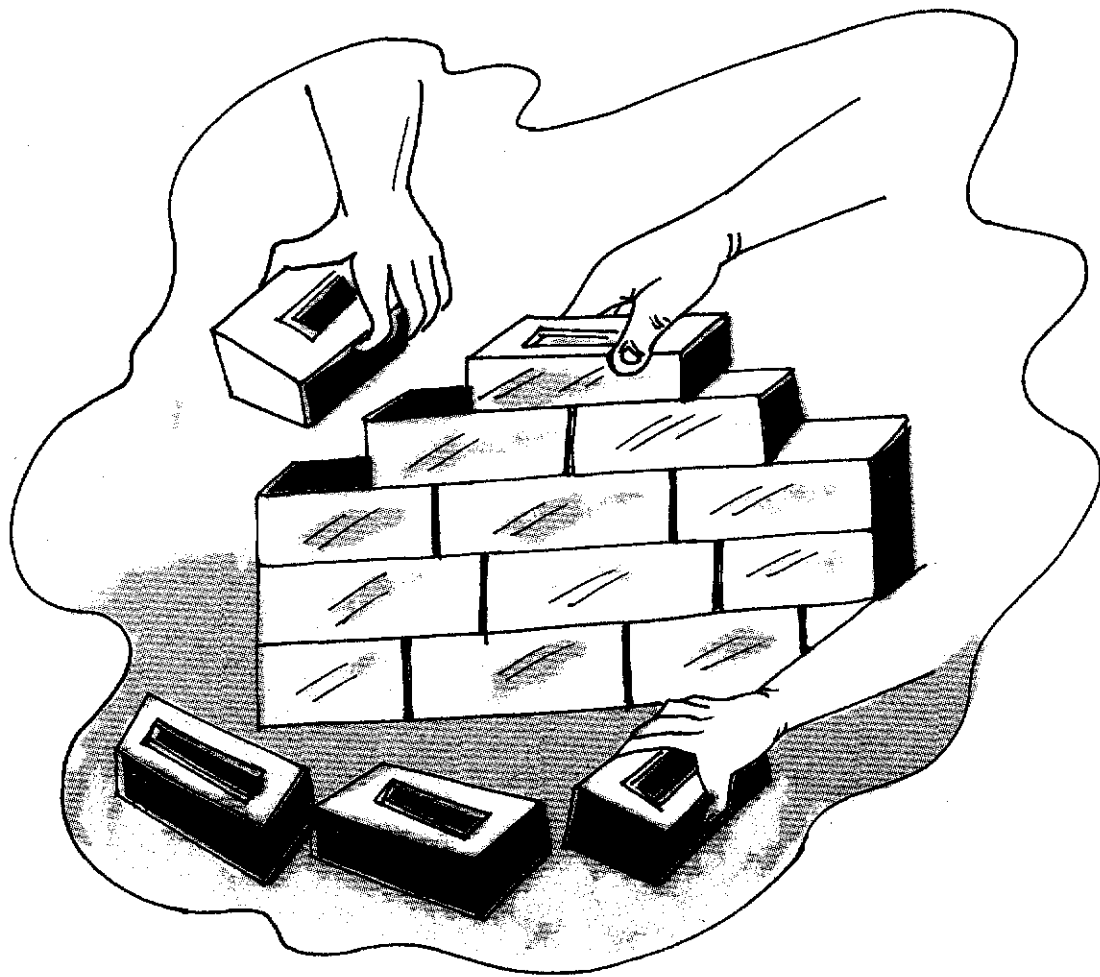
Indicators present a picture of a desirable situation and to what extent one may be falling short. For instance, women may say that they want water to be available 250 m away from their home from 6 a.m. – 7 p.m. in all seasons, 365 days. This becomes an indicator of functionality.

Indicators should have the following components[8]:

a) Issue being monitored

b) Clear definition of each keyword in the indicator.

c) The measure (How much? To what extent)

d) As needed, depending on the indicator:
   • The target population
   • Time frame
   • Location

For example: **Access to water**

Half of the households in 5 villages in a block within a district will have access to safe drinking water within a year after the project begins.

Access: means that each household gets water from a source located not more than 500m from the house.

Safe drinking water: water from a covered well, hand pump (India Mark II), piped water system.

How much: 50 % of households

By when: within a year after project begins.

Where: 5 villages in blocks of a district.

It is important for the people involved in the program to understand the indicators. Therefore, a definition of key words in the indicator should be provided.

There may be certain issues that due to their complex nature are not easy to define. For example-participation, ownership and gender sensitivity.

Possible indicators for gender sensitivity could be[9]:

• Poor, low caste women living away from the center of habitation know about the technology and costs of the project.

• Both sexes have an informed choice in the selection of water technology and local maintenance, management and financing systems.

• Women decide the sites for water points using the rules agreed upon

• Men can list 3 hygiene behaviors and explain how these help to keep children healthy.

Various meetings and consultations with groups of people can help in building good indicators. The responses generated from all levels on indicators should be compiled and presented to the group for their approval or for more inputs before the list is finalized.

Participatory learning action methodologies can also be used to produce good indicators.

Tips for facilitators

❖ During indicator building process, keep asking people at the meetings to define key words. For instance- functionality, reliability, good and effective committees etc. to make good indicators.

❖ Help people build 2-3 sets of indicators. Keep a short list in the beginning, to avoid over generation of data, which may not be used at all.

❖ Facilitators should help in developing a 'common understanding' on indicators amongst various actors involved in the project. Different interpretations of a word like 'functionality' 'effective' can lead to difference in gathering information. Hence, defining indicators as mentioned above is very important.

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[8] Shordt, Kathleen (2000). *Action Monitoring for Effectiveness, Improving water, hygiene and environmental sanitation programmes (Part 1).* Technical Paper Series, IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre, Netherlands
[9] ibid

STEP II

Building indicators on the issues identified

In the case of the village Dharali, two prominent issues highlighted at the meetings were:

(a) An ineffective VWSC

(b) An ineffective supply of water

These issues were acknowledged and indicators were developed, defining key words.

(a) An Ineffective VWSC

The VWSC was non transparent and dishonest.

Definition:

Non transparent: not able to share information details about the project, not able to share with the community how much money they have received from Project management Units (PMU) and what they have done with the community's fund which the community had contributed the form of cash and labour.

Dishonest: Financial bungling and misappropriation of funds by Village Water and Sanitation Committees (VWSC).

(b) An Ineffective supply of water

Supply of water is very poor in quality, dysfunctional stand posts and pipes in a bad condition.

Definition:

Poor in quality: The brown color of the water due to mud and silt composition.

Dysfunctional stand posts: No water, parts of the stand posts do not exist, and spare parts are missing.
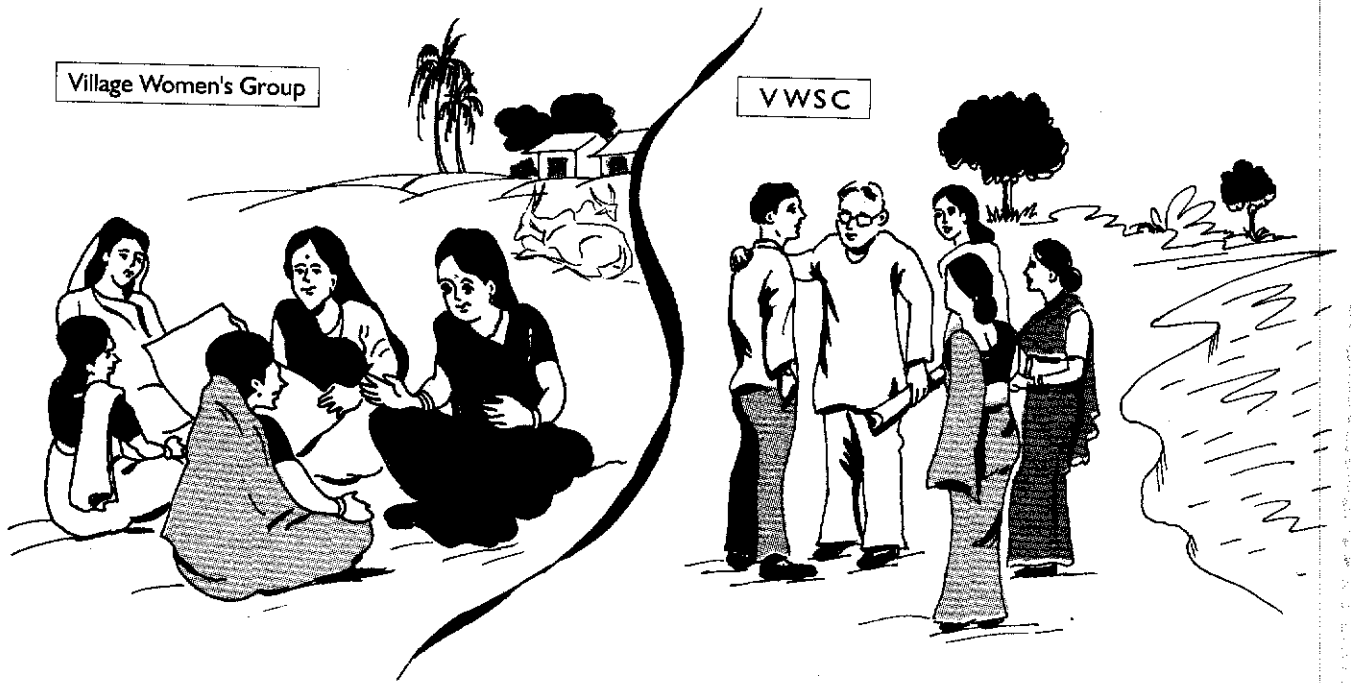
Bad condition of pipes: Exposed, broken and clogged.

Indicators were developed by the people who participated in consultations representing youth groups, poor households (men and women) and members of Panchayats.

STEP III

Identify interested actors, their roles in collecting the information

Village Women's Group

VWSC

As mentioned in the preceding steps, almost anyone can collect information based on their interest, great care is needed in identifying roles, those who collect, those who report and those who use the information. Often the people complaining about an issue or problem make the best monitors.

take an interest and feel motivated to monitor the identified issues. Many projects suffer, because monitoring has been assigned to those who are not particularly interested.

The following box contains list of issues[10] and those who may be interested in monitoring the particular issue.

Monitoring Issue	Groups interested in the issue
(a) Improve people's participation in planning and decision making	Local people (men, women, rich, poor) many panchayat members, often staff of support organization (NGOs)
(b) Good functioning of committee	Community (men, women, rich, poor) many panchayat members, SOs
(c) Storage sanitation demand (use of facilities, water related hygiene)	VWSC, teachers, women's groups, support organization.
(d) Well functioning school	Children, Parent Teachers association, SO staff, panchayats, contractors.

For instance, if the issue is quality of construction, the contractor may not be the right person to collect information, rather the committee members, users, NGO staff, Project Engineers will be the right people to monitor this issue.

It is very important to identify people who

Motivate people to collect information and triangulation for extra checks should be taken into consideration. For e.g. if the issue (c) storage sanitation demand is being monitored by VWSC, the teachers, women's groups and Support Organisation (SO) can be checked for the validity and reliability of information.

Tips for Facilitators

❖ Identify those people who have a vested interest in monitoring an issue, because they 'want to get it right'.

❖ Persuade them to monitor the issue.

❖ Facilitate a process where monitoring in the community is not seen as threatening. As a facilitator keep reinforcing that monitoring is not fault finding but making things work by bringing improvement. Issues like the functioning of committees, transparency etc. are vital issues but also need careful handling as the powerful groups in the community – VWSC and Panchayats might damage the process. The facilitator should be able to make these people feel comfortable and at ease.

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[10] Shordt, Katheleen; Wijk, Christine van and Dwivedi, Anju (February 2002). *Community Monitoring: Sanitation, Water, Hygiene and Management Processes*, IRC and PRIA

STEP III

Identify interested actors, their roles in collecting the information

In the village Dharali, the ineffective water supply was a major concern of the community including Panchayats. The other issue of an ineffective VWSC was also a major issue through the people agreed to attend to both the issues but with a greater focus on the first one. A youth group (mainly consisting of men) emerged in the process that came forward to actively participate in monitoring the issue. A core group of such people was formed with 6-7 members, representing each ward in the village to collect information on issue no. 1. The data collected was to be crosschecked by the facilitators with the panchayat head, members and women's group.

STEP IV

Develop Methods and Tools for Checking, Collection, Aggregation and Analysis of Data
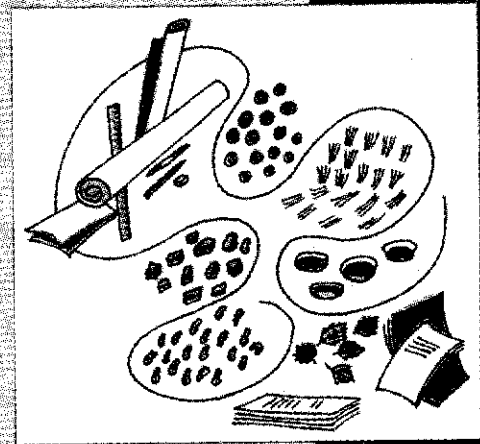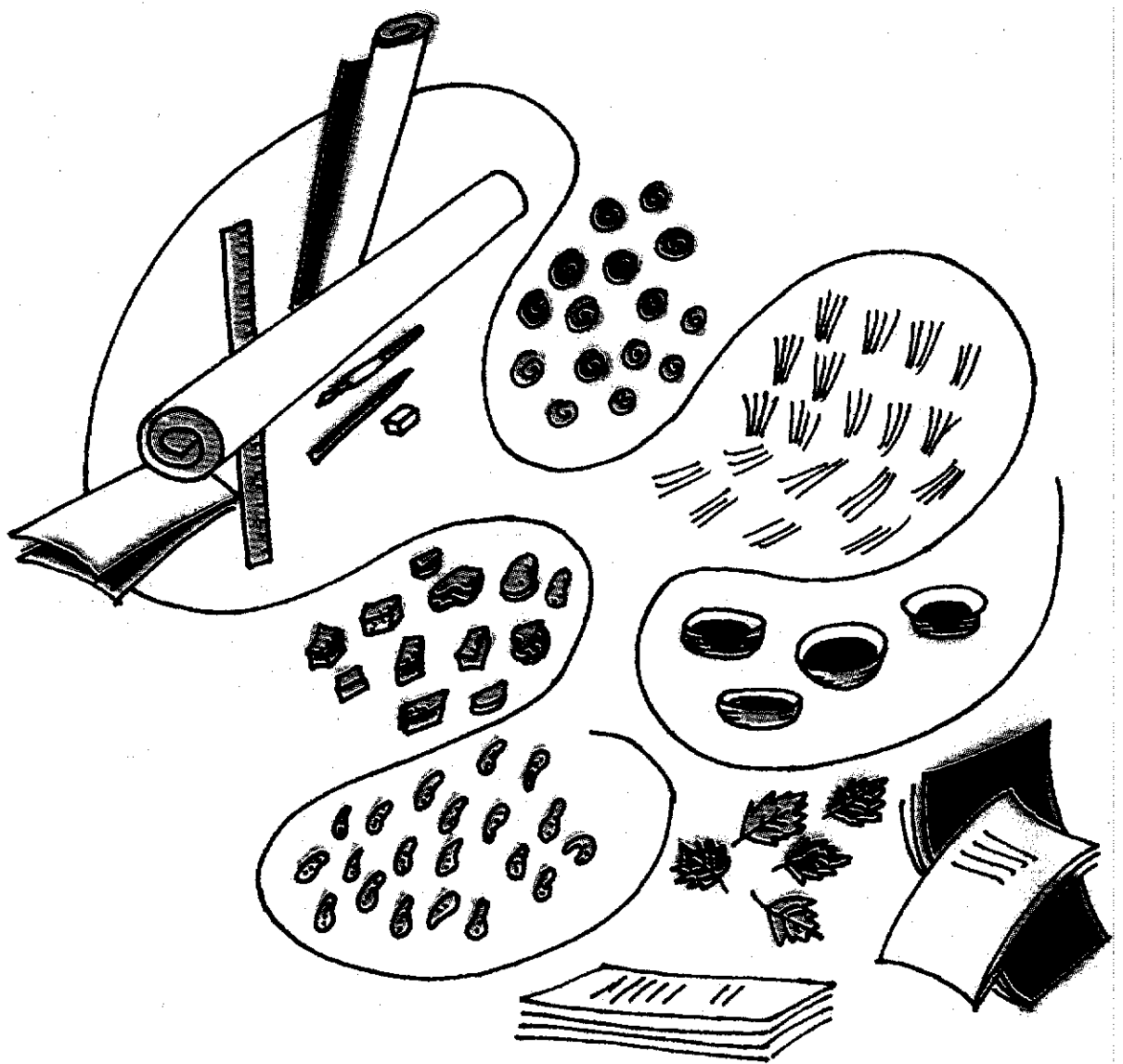
After the issues are identified, indicators are formulated and actors are identified (those who would be interested in the collection of data), the next step is to evolve methods and tools.

Methods refers to the way information is collected while tools are devices used for the collection of data. It is important to know whether monitoring will apply to the whole population or to a small group, as a sample will be sufficient. Deciding about this would depend on the issue identified for monitoring.

A hundred percent sampling means monitoring everything such as the entire population of community, wells, and hand pumps. For instance- whether all hand pumps installed in the community are operational. This would mean checking all the hand pumps installed in a community.

Other than 100% sampling, sometimes only a small sample of the total population would be sufficient, to supervise quality control of materials such as pipes, pumps and taps. In this case, very small samples could be selected from a larger set of materials and tested.

Representative sample:[11] a part of the population is selected so that the sample will have the same characteristics as the whole population. Like, 1/3 of the population having no latrines.

Representative sample is random or stratified sampling. In the former, the households or water points being studied are chosen at random from a list of households or water points. In stratified sampling, households are selected from each subgroup and the sample is taken from each subgroup.

When to collect information and for how long is another important decision in monitoring.

- Will it be *continuous* such as collection of funds for O and M and repairs
- Will it be a *one time or more than one time activity* such as quality of construction materials for hand pumps and latrines

- Will it be *periodic,* which is spread out– weekly, monthly or quarterly such as performance of committees, participation of women in meetings.

There are basically two types of information or data-quantitative and qualitative:

Quantitative (In numbers, amount, percentage)	Qualitative (What people do, know, think and experience)
❖ No. of people trained	❖ Do women participate
❖ No. of women mechanics	❖ Do they have any say in decision making
❖ No. of hand pumps installed	❖ Why do people not pay for O and M costs

The following methods could be used for the collection of data[12]

1. Observation:

Observation is seeing what is happening and recording it in some way. Observation helps in collecting information about – physical

[11] Boot, M. and Cairncross, S. (1993). *Actions Speak: The study of hygiene behaviour in water and sanitation projects.* Delft, The Netherlands, IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre, Netherlands

[12] See:

Srinivasan, L. (1990). *Tools for Community Participation: A Manual for training of trainers* (Prowwess/UNDP technical series involving women in water and sanitation: Lessons strategic tools) New York, NY, USA, Promotion of the role of women in water and environmental sanitation services, PROWWESS

Narayan, D. (1993). *Participatory Evaluation: tools for managing change in water and sanitation (technical paper; no. 207),* Washington, DC, USA, World Bank

Boot, M. and Cairncross, S. (1993). *Actions Speak: the study of hygiene behaviour in water and sanitation projects.* Delft, The Netherlands, IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre

Almedom, A.M; Bluementhal, U. and Manderson, L. (1997). *Hygiene evaluation procedures: approaches and methods for assessing water and sanitation-related hygiene practices.* Boston, MA, USA, International Nutrition Foundation for Developing Countries.

Dayal, R.; Wijk, C. van and Mukherjee, N. (1998). Participation, gender and demand responsiveness: making the links with impact and sustainability of water supply and sanitation investments. New Delhi, India, UNDP-World Bank Water and Sanitation program

conditions, functioning, use of water and behaviors.

The tools used for observation could be checklists, formats and registers.

(An example of a format is given in the case of Dharali in this section on page number 28)

2. Interview:

Interviews are about asking people or individuals about a situation by engaging them in a conversation. Open-ended interviews, semi structured interviews, structured interviews and focus group discussions are some different types of interviews, which could be used in collection of data.

It is important to encourage open-ended questions, which provide a range of topics for for analysis and discussions rather than asking questions, to which the answer can only be 'yes' or 'no'. For example, how was the committee selected? How can one improve the participation of women in site selection and decision-making? What can be done to improve the quality of water?

3. Using Documents: The documents especially, reports, forms, minutes of meetings can be used for monitoring. But this requires good quality reports which

include, specific indicators, information on indicators and follow up actions.

4. Participatory Learning Methods:

Participatory Learning Action Methodologies and SARAR tools (Self Esteem, Association Resourcefulness, Action Planning and Responsibility) have been used to implement learning and action among the communities. People examine their realities and learn from them. Participatory learning action methodologies and tools have been used to share a wide range of quantitative and qualitative information. Some of the methods used in monitoring are:

A. Mapping

Mapping is useful to generate information on the number of households, those with latrines and water points as well as the number of the more well to do households with the same. The map also shows the households that have been left out.

Maps can be used for monitoring by repeated analysis of the group on the same issue or different issues.

After this section Fact sheet No.1 demonstrates the better utilization of maps,

Maps can be made on the ground or on paper using locally available materials such as leaves, stones, sticks, as well as on paper with pens or pencils.

A facilitator introduces the activity, its purpose, information can be collected jointly and placed on the map, time should be given to people to decide as to how they want to proceed, and the materials they would prefer to use. They have to be helped to develop a basic list of features that they want to depict on the map. For example, households, water points, other water resources etc.

The people should draw maps, and encourage discussions. Some interesting comments and important information, during discussion and in the process of drawing maps, can be noted by the facilitator. The names of people who participated in the map drawing with the date and time could be listed. If the map is made on the ground, it can be copied onto a sheet of paper. After the completion of the exercise, feedback about the findings should be given to the group as has been understood by the facilitator and used to generate more discussions. When the maps have been drawn by men and women separately, both the maps should be shown to the groups and a feedback provided to resolve the differences which exist.

which is one of the
issues raised in one of
the water and
sanitation project sites
in India.

B. Transect Walks

Transect walks are
systematic walks with
the key informants in the
community. The transect
walks help in understanding
power divisions, environment,
sanitation, construction quality,
among other issues.

The group of men and women or facilitators or whoever is interested can make systematic observations and keep recording them on notepads focusing on the quality of construction, access and use of resources etc. Visits to latrines-households and institutions can be made to observe the cleanliness, hygiene and how often used (though use of latrines is a very difficult issue to monitor). Tools such as checklists or questionnaires can be used to record the data.

Other Participatory Methods that could be used are Venn Diagramming, Pie Chart, Seasonality Charts, Matrix Scoring, Ladder Exercises, Card Sorting, and Pocket Voting[13].

After the data is collected, it is essential to utilize the data by aggregation and analysis. People have to be helped to score and make sense of trends emerging from the data collection process. The following sheets provide basic understanding of how a method can be used to collect information on particular issue, how to do scoring and how action plans can emerge for appropriate timely actions.
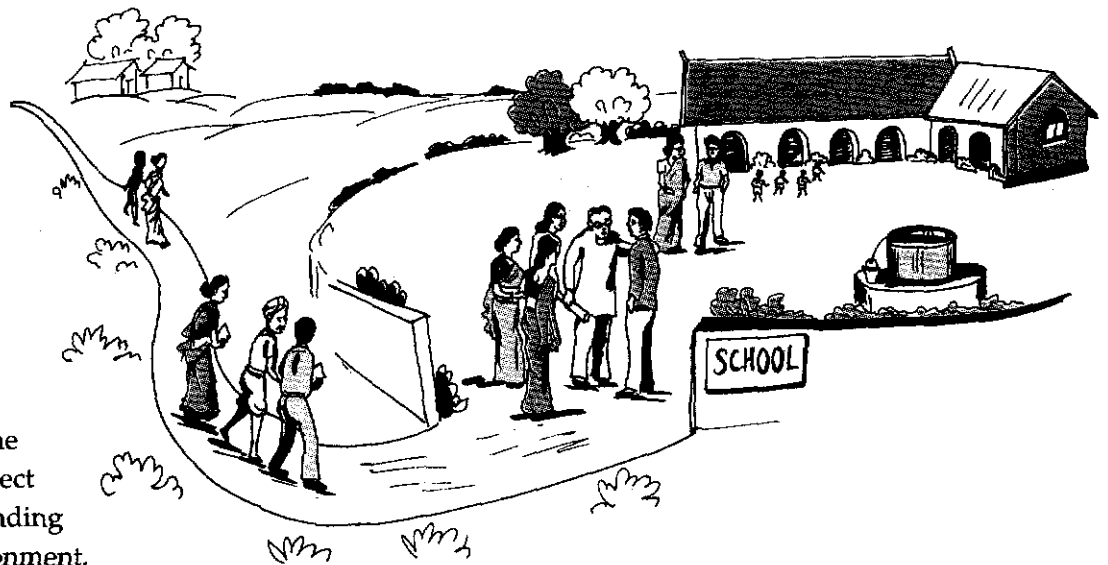
Tips for Facilitators

❖ Help people choose simple methods and tools that provide valid information

❖ There is a temptation to collect information for a longer periods than necessary. This may reduce the accuracy of results and people might feel disinterested if they see no advantage in continuing to collect and analyze data.

❖ Producing vast amounts of data should be avoided as that might be difficult to analyze and use.

❖ Those who develop tools and methods should first test them out in conditions similar to those that were originally intended for them.

❖ The capacities of facilitators should enable them to try out the methods. If a facilitator is not comfortable using a particular method (especially PRAs), it is advisable not to attempt it till adequate capacities have been enhanced in the facilitator.

[13] Shordt, Kathleen (2000), *Action Monitoring for Effectiveness, Improving water, hygiene and environmental sanitation programmes (Part II - Fact Sheets)*, Technical Paper Series, IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre, Netherlands

Dayal, R.; Wijk, C. van and Mukherjee, N. (2000). *Methodology for Participatory Assessments with Communities, Institutions and Policy Makers: Linking Sustainability demand responsiveness with Demand, Gender and Poverty.* World Bank Water and Sanitation program, Washington.

STEP IV

Develop Methods and Tools for Checking, Collection, Aggregation and Analysis of Data

The data on the indicators was collected on a daily basis by the core group every month. It was a difficult process in the beginning as people largely felt that nothing would come out of it and no body would lend any ear to their concerns. These factors were becoming demotivating for the monitors as well. Slowly, the process picked up when sharing of information became a joint initiative.

Observation, Interviews with user groups, Transects by the core group members were some key methods used in the collection of data. A format was developed as a tool to collect information.

Monitors or core group members collected the information by visiting each stand post, interviews and discussions with the beneficiary groups and through their own observations. The information would be put in the formats.

Monitoring Format: Water Supply in Village Dharali						
Indicators	**June**	**July**	**August**	**September**	**October**	**November**
Availability of Water (in days)						
How many standposts are operational?						
The quality of water						
Is the pipeline damaged?						
Signatures of the core group members	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4

The same format was used for each month. Changes were made according to the day and the week.

Based on the information generated, an application was to be submitted to the village panchayat. The format used was:

To :

The Pradhan   Date:

Village Dharali

Subject: Monthly Progress Report

Sir

We have monitored the water supply (SWAJAL) last month, and are bringing the following to your notice for immediate action:

- -

- -

- -

- -

- -

- -

You are requested to act on the proposed points immediately. And please also request the VWSC to act for the benefit of the larger community so that the water supply is improved.

Sincerely

(Members of core group)

At the end of each month, the filled formats were given to the panchayat and the VWSC chairperson and discussions would take place with the VWSC, community members, core group and panchayats. Convening a meeting was the responsibility of the panchayat leader. However, core group members played an active role in helping the panchayats to arrange a meeting every month. The meeting was to be attended by the panchayat members, core group, VWSC members and other community members depending upon the availability of the members in the village. The facilitators would be present in the meetings.

Based on the engagement of the people in the village, meetings were convened at the time when most of the people could attend. In agriculture seasons, the meetings were conducted after 10:00 PM.

In the meetings, the reasons for regular/ irregular, good/bad quality of water, functional/ nonfunctional stand posts, contributions of the community were discussed and some actions were planned. The idea behind monitoring was not just collection of data but to develop ways to address gaps. If the data on regularity of water was discussed, the reasons for that were explored in greater

details. Following this, some possible actions were also listed.

This can be explained with the following examples:

Example 1

Indicator: Quality of water

Finding: Not up to the mark

Reasons:

1. The water was not suitable for drinking purposes as the tank where it was being stored, was built so low that the silt and mudflow could not be controlled.

2. The bleach was not put in regularly

Action plan:

1. Raising the height of the tank or digging drains

2. Afforestation near the source

3. Proper capping of the tank

4. Regular dropping of bleaching powder in the tank

Example 2:

Indicator: Contribution of Community (for O and M)

Finding: Nobody was contributing for O and M

Reasons:

1. No faith on VWSC as it had used up the money which they contributed in form of labor

2. Have never paid for water in their lives

Action Plan:

1. Understand the information gaps and find out how the VWSC could misappropriate the funds by asking DPMU to provide the information

2. Urge DPMU to invest in capacities of the VWSC for O and M

3. Help to form a committee by the majority of the people in the village with representatives from each household, depending largely upon the youths to collect the money from the households and open a post office account for O and M. Two-three VWSC members would also be in the committee which would then be placed under the panchayat.

These action plans were to be discussed in the village level meetings, which actions followed, those that could not and the reasons for that.

STEP V

Help actors take action at the lowest possible level and arrange for actions at other levels
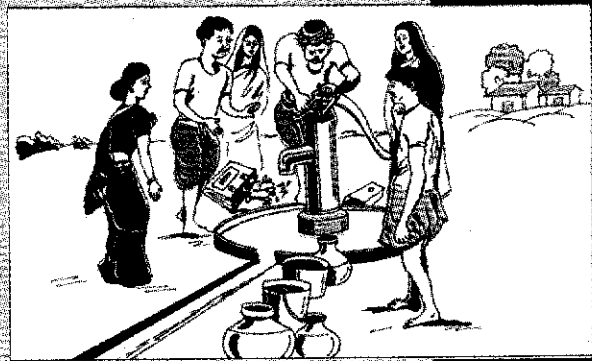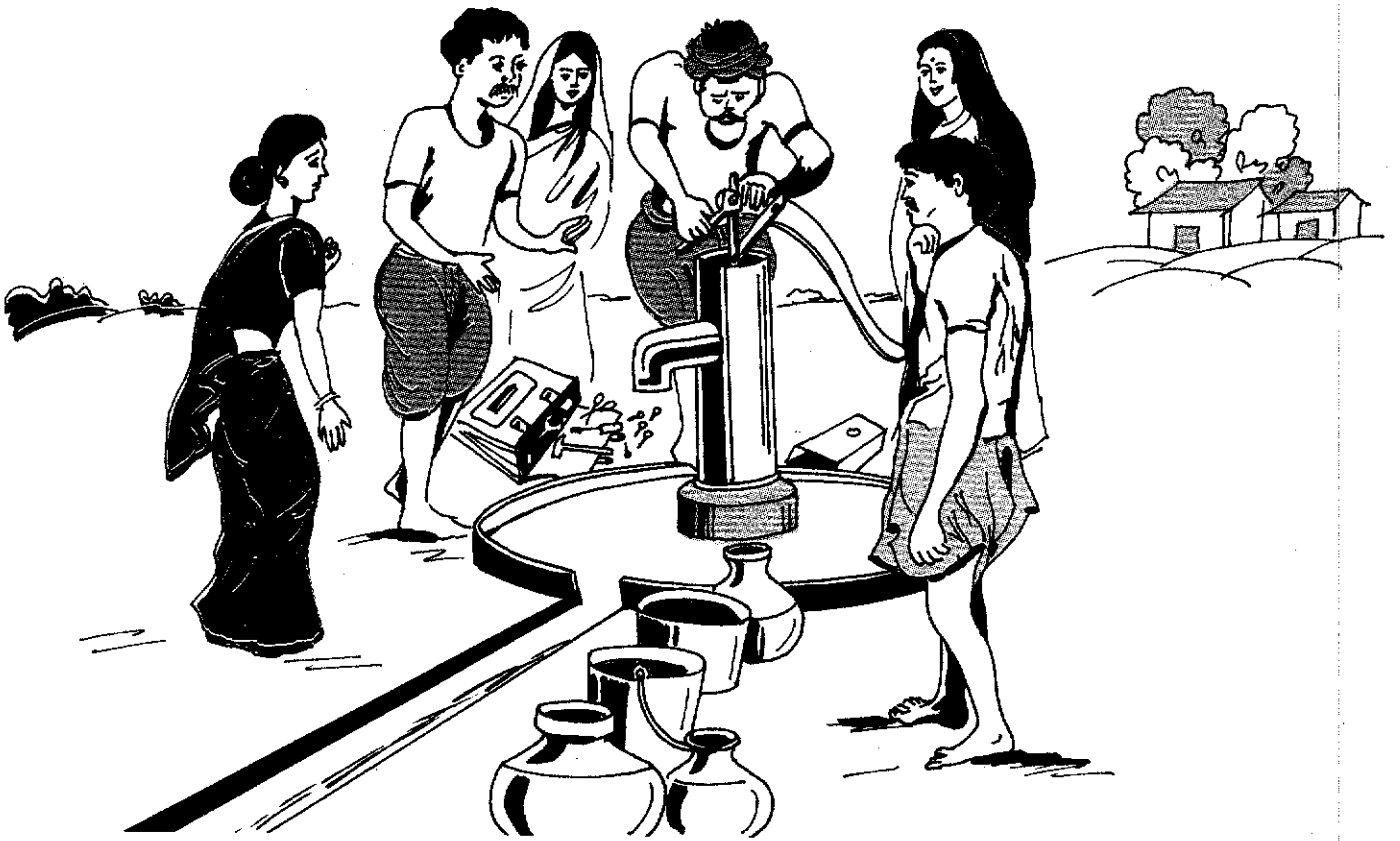
Monitoring may show that there is a gap between a real situation and a planned situation. This requires immediate action, because if known problems remain unattended they may get worse and can seriously harm the project.

Some actions are possible at the local level where the communities themselves can gear up to take actions such as :

(a) Repairing broken hand pumps by the community caretakers

(b) Improving the system of local tariff collection

(c) Changing the venue and timing of the meeting to ensure women's participation

Some action may not be possible at the local level it may need to be referred to those people, institutions, from whom the response will be positive and help to improve the situation.

For instance:

• Water quality: Fluoride or Arsenic contamination

• Operation and Maintenance (O & M) : Major breakdowns

• Other demands of the program such as misappropriation, problems related to administering subsidies to poor families; Capacity building or training requirements etc.

For each case, the community monitoring should however deal with:

• Who refers a complaint
• Who receives the referral
• Who responds
• How the information is transmitted

If an adequate response does not come from the first level the complaint should be directed to other levels, for instance if the referral is made to panchayats and no response is received, referrals should be directed to other levels, such as block, district and state.

Tips for Facilitators

❖ The facilitator should encourage the community to take action at their level, if possible

❖ Constantly monitor whether actions discussed were carried out or not. If not, then engage with community in understanding the reasons.

❖ Opt for another plan of action if the first does not materialize

❖ Help people to make referrals to the higher levels

❖ Proper orientation and facilitation is required to ensure responsiveness

❖ Facilitators should also develop and update their own capacities in facilitating this step.

STEP V

Help actors take action at the lowest possible level and arrange for actions at other levels

After the action plans emerged, the next step was to identify who could help in taking action locally and at the district and state level) as per the action plan and how to mobilize human and financial resources for the same. In the examples given above, the following actions were planned or undertaken as in April 2002:

Action plan I	Who would/should act	Actions taken or to be undertaken
➤ Raising height of the tank or digging the drain	VWSC, Community and Panchayat	Labour contribution to dig the drain around the tank to allow dirty water to flow into the drain and not in the tank.
➤ Afforestation near the source	District Project Management Unit (DPMU)	DPMU has been asked to support this initiative after April
➤ Proper capping of tank	Community and VWSC	Temporarily people covered it
➤ Regular dropping of bleaching powder into the tank	VWSC	Water is bleached fortnightly, every week in rains
Action plan II	**Who would/should act**	**Actions taken or to be undertaken**
➤ Understand the information gaps	VWSC, DPMU, SO	Meetings with DPMU officials and VWSC members of other SWAJAL villages helped in orienting Dharali community about the project
➤ Urge DPMU to invest in capacities of VWSC for O and M	DPMU	DPMU organized a six day training on O and M for the whole block in two batches for SWAJAL VWSC members. It is also planning to integrate the O and M training component in the current SWAJAL programme.
➤ Replace the VWSC committee members or contribute money to a group of youths	Panchayat, VWSC and community	VDC formed in the village responsible for O and M and other development initiatives. Contributions from the community are taken per month.

Action monitoring was possible through a long and ongoing process of capacity building and facilitation.

Problem is at the individual level Facilitation is individual centered		Problem is at the group level Facilitation is group centered	
Focus on Action and of Behaviour Interactive Mode	Focus is at the level of Awareness Intrusive Mode	Focus on Action and Behaviour Inclusive Mode	Focus is at the level Awareness Interpretive Mode

Interactive Mode: In the Interactive mode, the *focus is on change in action and behavior* when the problem exists at the individual level. This facilitation style was used many times during facilitating community monitoring in Dharali. In the meetings, facilitators observed that VWSC chairperson was not very keen earlier to attend the meetings. By his behavior he was able to avoid any face-to-face interaction with the community and the pradhan. The facilitators met him individually and asked him to be in direct contact with the people if he felt he was innocent and the charges of corruptions were false. He would be able to prove his innocence, by sharing the information with the people and putting forward his views on the whole issue of corruption in SWAJAL. This facilitation style is educative and through support and education the change in behaviour in the individual can be sought. As time passed, the chairperson of VWSC became more open and transparent.

Intrusive Mode: The problem is at the individual level and *the focus of the change is at the level of awareness.* With the assumption that the individual is interested in learning about the self, the facilitator presents to the individuals what the facilitator has observed. In this mode, the facilitator intrudes into the individual life space. This was the least tried mode in Community monitoring in Dharali, except in one case when the pradhan was initially not very pleased with the proposed intervention as he felt that a scheme like this should be government owned and managed. People do not have capacities to run any scheme. He was very keen on writing to and

asking the district magistrate to take over the scheme. The facilitators informed him that once taken, the scheme could not be returned to the government. People would have to learn to manage their resources. On several occasions, the facilitators realized that the pradhan was not prepared to play the role of a leader (his wife was the elected pradhan while he was acting on her behalf). He had avoided getting into conflicts or resolving them if they arose. He realized that he lacked leadership skills and needed improvement, the facilitators asked him to analyse why he was like this and why he did not allow his wife to take the lead when she was an elected pradhan.

Inclusive Mode: This mode is used when the problem is at the level of the group and the *focus is change in action.* The facilitator deliberately chooses himself as a member of the group and provides a model behavior that can be adopted by the group. In the meetings, the facilitators observed that arguments and fights would stall the process. Active listening was avoided in the group, the facilitator chose to allow group members to speak one by one, and in the process the facilitator also demonstrated how it could be achieved by following the same process. In another incident, the clothes clogging the pipes were removed by the facilitators, which showed the community members that no outsider is needed to fix small problems in the village. As a result, the community members became very vigilant about obstructions in the pipes and fines were imposed on those found guilty.

Interpretive Mode: Having diagnosed the problem to be at the *level of awareness* of the group, the facilitator deliberately chooses to be an outsider. The problem is analysed objectively and interpretation is presented impersonally to the group. This mode was used many times during community monitoring in Dharali. The facilitators tried to analyse the problem as outsiders who had seen other SWAJAL schemes and presented their views on the problems existing in the village. Poor management of resources by the community was compared with another village where VWSC with the help of community was managing the project very well. This had to do with lack of awareness of the people about the provisions in the project. The group had a limited understanding of their role and the role of VWSC and panchayats. In this style, facilitators helped in pointing from where information could be obtained.

FACT SHEETS

This section of fact sheets has been largely reproduced from the report on Community Monitoring: Sanitation, Water, Hygiene and Management Processes, (IRC & PRIA). This report is based on the assignment undertaken for UNICEF to guide the process of community monitoring models for Child Survival Project. These factsheets are the examples of monitoring by relevant actors of an issue which were raised during field visits undertaken by IRC & PRIA consultants for UNICEF's Child Survival Project.
Prior permission from IRC has been obtained for wider use of the material.

Better use of maps and initial capacity building activities
with special attention to gender and poverty

❶ Issue

Maps tend to be used by paid intermediaries as planning tools as well as a way of introducing the programme to the community. One challenge is shift this so that the initial mapping and PRA activities become tools to be used by neighbourhood groups, village committtees and Panchayats doing their own active monitoring and planning. Secondly, the quality of the maps can be improved by, for example, making them poverty and gender specific. Thirdly, the tools may be used to monitor other indicators, such as capacity building and decision-making, if the groups desired to monitor such aspects.

❷ Issues for monitoring

These may include, but are not limited to:

Access to and use of household latrines by socio-economic criteria*	Access to and use of training by class and sex
Access to and use of safe water sources by socio-economic criteria*	Access of girls to education by class
Decision-making positions held by class and sex	Participation in meetings by class and sex

E.g., High/Middle/Low socio-economic status; APL/BPL; non-SC/ST and SC/ST

❸ Who collects or checks ?

In community-based systems, local groups can make and update the maps and matrices. Representative village groups should be in charge. They do the analysis and make improvements, starting from the lowest (neighbourhood) level. Items that cannot be resolved at that level can be referred to a higher level and with appropriate follow-up until resolved. The intermediary's role becomes one of facilitation: training the groups, motivating them and backing them up. The intermediaries can help to achieve that participation in the mapping and division of responsibilities/workloads are equitable (no domination by one group of men or by the richer/ upper caste women)

❹ Monitoring plan on social mapping/matrix analysis

The moderators assist the neighbourhood/user groups to map their own neighbourhood. Each house may have a specific form or colour to indicateAPL/BPL, caste level, etc. To determine local indicators for high, middle and low status households, moderators may ask three subgroups to make three drawings: a household in fortunate conditions, a household in unfortunate conditions and an in-between household. The groups then choose the shapes or colours to use for each group and decide which households belong to which group when they draw their map.

In the map, the local women and men mark domestic latrines, access areas to safe water sources, in which houses women or men hold functions, have special skills, got certain training, and so on. The marking can be down with local coloured materials or standard drawing materials. The subgroups then count and make overview tables (matrices) to analyse their information, for example:

Socioeconomic group	With latrine	Without latrine
High	11	0
Middle	23	6
Low	41	36

Empowerment	Work	Women	Men
Trained	Unpaid	**	***
	Paid		*****
Decision making functions	Unpaid	*	*****
	Paid		***

Map and table can also be used to analyse good and risky practices, for example, in which households with latrines in the neighbourhood are family members not always using the latrine? What might be reasons for this[1]?

❺ Action based on monitoring information

The group decides on action that may be taken to improve neighbourhood conditions and practices, for example:

- Motivating households without latrine to install one using tailored strategies[2];
- Finding out limitations of poor households, women-headed household, such as no money, no labour, no access to /use of water point, and helping to solve these problems;
- If no solutions can be found in the group, taking up the issue to village/Panchayat level
- Village/Panchayat encourages neighbourhoods to compete in getting access for all, monitors progress, motivate/assists the neighbourhoods with lower/inequal access/fewer resources

❻ Monitoring at higher level

Higher levels (Gram panchayat/mandal/ district) may monitor neighbourhood level achievements comparatively through bar diagrams. An example:

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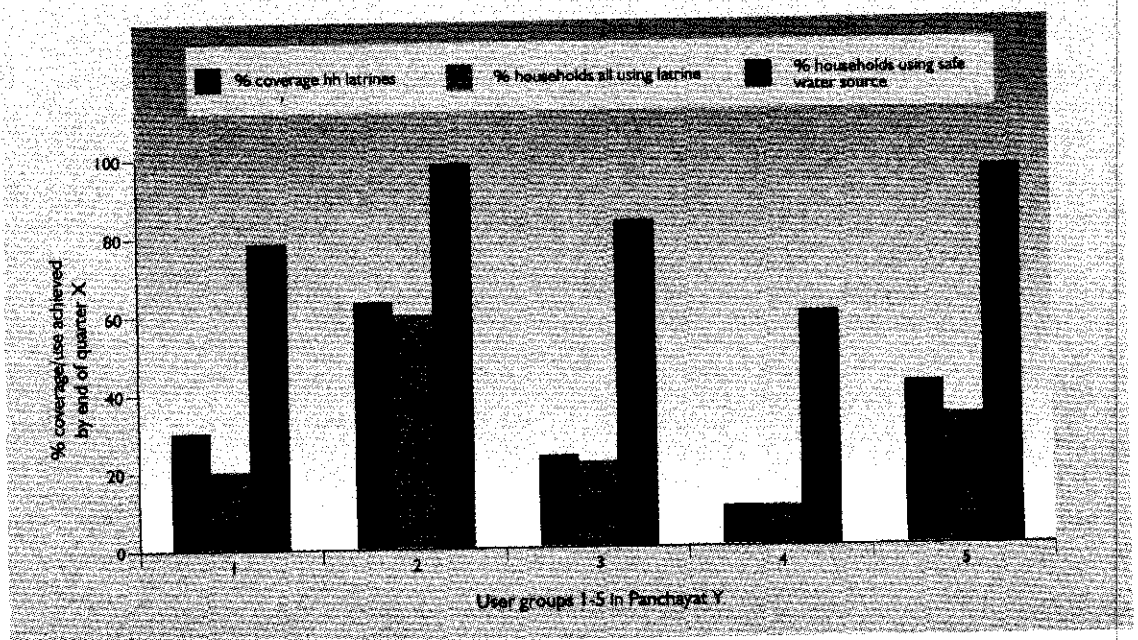
[1] Check especially for men, boys and small babies. Often, people think child excreta are harmless. They throw them on the compost pit or leave them about for flies to sit on and then sit on food, etc.

[2] E.g.women neighbours with latrines approach the women in these households, male neighbours the men.

Monitoring People's Participation in Decision-making
with special attention to gender and poverty

❶ Issue

In many Gran Sabhas, only a small percentage of the people participate. Often these are from the elite in the main village. If women, or women and men from more marginal groups and SC/ST attend at all, they often will not speak out or have no influence if they do.

❷ Issues/Indicators

Poor women/men knew about the meeting	Poor women/men have attended the meeting
Poor women/men did not attend the meeting but they know what came out	Poor women/men did not attend but could influence its outcome through their representative
Poor women/men have attended and spoken out at the meeting	Poor women/men have attended and spoken out at the meeting

❸ Who collects or checks?

Often, paid NGO workers will monitor, but in some states/communities also Gram Panchayat members may wish to do this. For cultural (gender) reasons, preferably women workers/GP members will discuss with female villagers and men staff with male villagers.

❹ Monitoring plan on information/participation

The workers visit the different sections. In each section they ask a woman about (i) her information and (ii) participation.[3] They also form an impression on whether this was a poor women, a better-off woman but from a secluded family, an educated woman from a more progressive family, etc. Afterwards they summarise the information in their notebooks. They do the same with one man in each community and section. In plenary, the group reports their findings.

❺ Action based on monitoring information

The group decides on action that may be taken to improve the flow of information, the attendance and quality of participation in meetings, for example.

* Holding the meeting at places and times that are more appropriate for poor women and men
* Informing women and poor people such as through local women leaders, school children, loudspeaker, GP member of their area, HP user group, and so on;
* Encouraging (poor) women and men to attend in groups, plan delegations;
* Following up with groups that attend least, learning what their problems are.

> **What is needed for this monitoring?**
>
> 1. As many bowls as there are villages and hamlets in the Panchayat;
> 2. Beans/peas in a different colour, one colour in each bowl
> 3. Two boxes (or large bowls) at the end of the row, one labelled ♀ and one ♂
> 4. A large sheet of paper and a felt-tipped pen
> 5. A local facilitator to guide the monitoring

---

[3] For example: Did she know about last GS meeting? When and where it took place and on what subject(s)? If yes from whom? If no, why not? Ifshe knew, whether she attended or not. If she did not attend, why not? What would help her attend?

❻ Monitoring plan during meetings

To monitor attendance during meetings, you need:

Upon entry, each participant takes a bean or pea from her/his village bowl. S/he then places this bean/pea in the box of her sex. When all participants have entered, the facilitator tallies the number of women and men participants from each community. S/he enters the data in a matrix and presents this to the meeting.

Example of a scoring matrix on representativeness by village and sex				
Name of village/hamlet	# Women present	Total	# Men present	Total
P[4]	ℍℍ	5	ℍℍ ℍℍ ℍℍ ℍℍ ℍℍ I I	22
Q[5]	I I	2	ℍℍ ℍℍ	10
X[6]		0	I I I	3
Y[7]		0		0
Z[8]	I I	0	ℍℍ ℍℍ	10
Total number of women		7	Total number of men	45

Action based on monitoring information

The participants discuss reasons and plan action if participation is unbalanced, for example:

Better information and facilitation for women and poor (see above);

Hold meetings in the individual communities;

Participants from underrepresented villages try to encourage neighbours, friends to come.

Comparison with subsequent results will show if the action works.

❼ Monitoring plan on women speaking out during meeting

During the meeting, the facilitator (who may be a volunteer from the meeting) scores each time a man or a woman speaks by tallying or by dropping a bean of the designated colour into a bowl or a glass. Halfway through the meeting s/he presents the status.

❽ Action based on monitoring information

There is an analysis and action is decided on, for example:

* There is a break for women to discuss the issue and speak out;
* Women from each village/hamlet choose a spokeswoman;
* The chair facilitates the speaking out of women/spokeswomen;
* Women and men have their own meetings and then get together.

Again, continued monitoring can show whether there is an improvement or more action is required.

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[4] In this example, this village is the Gram Panchayat seat

[5] Socio-economically more developed village near Gram Panchayat seat

[6] Poor hamlet near Gram Panchayat seat

[7] Poor hamlet far from Gram Panchayat seat

[8] Community at some distance from Gram Panchayat seat but with active male leader

⑩ Monitoring plan on influence of women and men on decision-making

This activity is done, for example, with members of a water committee, the Gram Panchayat, or groups of poor women and men. Lay out the table or hang some pockets at some distance for secrecy. Women and men score their experience by putting a bean or markerbean on the cell or in the pocket concerned. The facilitator displays the scores on the ground. The group the analyses the situation. This will include differences in perception by women and men.

Action based on monitoring information:

- Discuss of functions of committees before forming them;
- Discuss which functions best by women, which by men;
- Women choose own women committee members
- Change rules, timing and location of meetings. Example: meetings once in 2 months rather than once a month.

Example of Scoring Table about participation of women and men in decision-making		
Women's participation and influence as compared with men's	**Scores Women**	**Scores Men**
No women in local management body or only in name		
Women are represented in the local management body, but do not attend meetings regularly		
Women are represented in the local management body, attend meetings regularly, but have no voice in decision-making		
Women are represented in the local management body, attend meetings and make decisions together with men		
Women and men both participate in decision-making at higher levels, e.g. at district level		

Based on: van Wijk-Sijbesma, Christine, 2001. The Best of Two Worlds? Methodology for Participatory Assessment of Community Water Servcies. (Technical Paper Series No. 38). Delft: IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre.

Aggregation of data at higher level

For aggregating of scores in the different communities of the project, it is possible to convert the above scores into village level scores:

Aggregation of community scores on gender and decision making project villages								
Women's participation and influence as compared with men's	**Score**	**Village name**						**Total**
		A	B	C	D	E	F	
No women in local management body or only in name	0		0		0			2
Women are represented in the local management body, but do not attend meetings regularly	1	1				1		2
Women are represented in the local management body, attend meetings regularly, but have no voice in decision-making	2			1				1
Women are represented in the local management body, attend meetings and make decisions together with men	3						1	1
Women and men both participate in decision-making at higher levels, e.g. at district level	4							0
TOTAL								6

At management level, the aggregated information shows where more efforts are needed. Over time, improvements in villages will get reflected in the aggregated information. If used to build up a data base, trend analysis, graphic representations and statistical analysis become possible.

FACT SHEET 3 # Monitoring for good composition and functioning of committees
with special attention to gender and poverty

❶ Issue

Many committees, at user group, village, Gram Panchayat and district level, represent the local elite and particularly the men within the elite. Committees can be compromised because they have very few women members or do not represent all the local hamlets/villages, or just do not perform well. This limits the influence, accountability and trust of poor people and women in planning and management. Monitoring how committees are formed and composed and how they function are first steps for (self) improvements.

❷ Issues/Indicators

Poor women/men take part in forming the committee	Committee meetings are held regularly with poor women/men attending
Poor women/men are members of the committees at each level	Poor women/men participate in decision-making at these meetings
Committee members inform/account to community members for their management, including to poor women and men	

❸ Who collects or checks?

In the first place, the members of the user groups themselves. Also NGO workers and Government staff should monitor this when they meet with the committees and the groups.

❹ Monitoring plan on formation and composition of committees

To make this a participatory activity which can lead to action, the user group/Panchayat and/or NGO workers need five drawings (see box). The moderator first discusses with the group(s) concerned what committees deal with water/sanitation and hygiene and what their tasks are. S/he then lays out the drawings and asks those present what they think the drawings mean. These are discussed until the meaning of each drawing is clear. Then the moderator

> **Materials needed:**
>
> Drawings of four groups of people
>
> 1. a few external project workers (NGO/Gvt)
> 2. a few local leaders (men)
> 3. a few local leaders (men & women)
> 4. a large group of local men
> 5. a large group of local women

asks the participants to vote (using two types of local material, one for women, one for men) on who, in their view, did determine or, when planning, should determine the composition of each committee.

In the second part of the activity, the groups may use matrix voting with local materials (such as beans) or with drawing materials to establish the composition of the committees. They then discuss the implications of the absence or lack of balance of village men or women in each committee and what can and will be done. Thereafter they regroup the tokens into men and women members from well-off (influential) and poor households. The same discussion follows, now on representation of poor women and men.

User groups	Committee of User group (1)	• • • • • •	•
	Committee of User group (2) etc.	• • • •	
Schools	Water and sanitation committee of Angawadi		• • • • • • • •
	Water and sanitation committee of School (1)	• • • • • •	• •
Village	Village water and sanitation committee	• • • • •	
Panchayat	Panchayat water and sanitation committee	•	
District	District water and sanitation committee		

❺ Action based on monitoring information

The group(s) decide(s) on action that may be taken to improve the formation and composition of committees, for example:

• Decide that committees are formed in meetings with a quorum of women and men

• Determine which committee functions/activities are best carried out by women and which by men and find suitable candidates among better off and poor during formation meetings

• Unite with other hamlets/communities to insist on a more equal representation by location, sex and class in higher level committees

❻ Monitoring plan on committee performance

Possible indicators for committee performance are the regular meeting of committees, the degree of participation of poor and better off, women and men, the making and implementing of decisions and the regular accounting by the committees for their proper management (including financial management) to men and women heads of households.

Committees may monitor regularity of meetings with the help of a simple timeline or calendar and participation registration by sexe, class and location.

For monitoring action progress, many committees develop, as part of their minutes, a system to list the planned action with the person responsible and the targeted date. They then use this list to monitor the implementation. A long and growing list and/or many delays in implementation may indicate the presence of internal problems and/or problems at the support level.

❼ Action based on performance

When the committees see that they do not meet/meet fairly regularly, not all meet and/or do not make progress they may analyse why this is so and take problem solving actions, e.g.

• Plan as many regular meetings as needed and at a convenient time and place

• Find out why some members do not attend and help them take problem solving action

• Evaluate and adjust the division of tasks and workloads between the committee members

• Consider the election of a new committtee member or members (s) when the only or main reasons for poor performance are personal characteristics. (Otherwise, the action may not solve the real problems)

❸ Aggregation of data at higher level

Comparative percentages of committee members who are women; members from poor households and percentage of hamlets and villages represented - shows how well committees/communities/CBOs/NGOs and districts do on these aspects over time. For example:
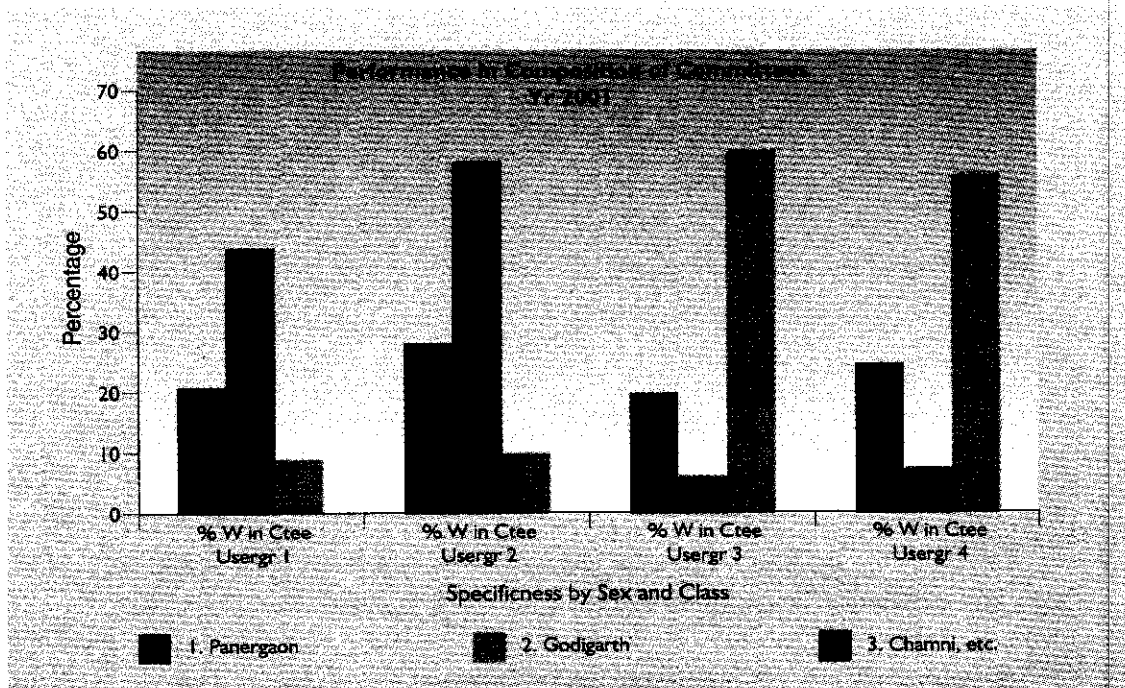
[1] The MPA (Methodology for Participatory Assessment) has a special activity and a participatory tool for this assessment.

Key Principles of Community Monitoring

- People will readily monitor those issues, which concern them the most. All issues related to the project may not be considered relevant for their monitoring.

- Monitoring for the sake of monitoring has no value. Community empowerment can emerge from informed reflection and discussion within the group and outside.

- People have enormous capacity to improve their community based systems and practices. Those capacities have to be recognized and properly utilized.

- Capacity building required at each step, is the key to monitoring. It is an ongoing process rather than a one-time activity. This helps the marginalized groups to develop confidence in their ability to improve the situation through meaningful action as also to take corrective action or innovate, wherever needed.

- Facilitators of community monitoring also need to build their own capacity to facilitate a process, which empowers the people to improve situations and effectively manage their resources.

- People possess abilities to engage in investigation of issues related to them, reflect on those issues and think of possible actions. Without any action undertaken, the monitoring cycle is incomplete.

- Community monitoring systems are built up gradually, beginning with a limited number of concerns or issues.

Some Useful Readings

1. Boot, M. (1987) Training Course: Evaluating Water Supply and Sanitation Projects. Delft, The Netherlands, IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre

2. Chambers, R. (1992). Actual or Potential uses of RRA/PRA methods in health and nutrition. In: IIED. RRA notes, no. 16: Special issue on application for health. London, UK, International Institute for Environment Development

3. Narayan, D. (1996). Towards Participatory Research. (Technical Paper; no. 307), Washington, DC, USA, World Bank

4. Narayan-Parker, D. (1989). Goals and Indicators for integrated water supply and sanitation projects in partnership with people. (PROWWESS/UNDP technical series; involving women in water and sanitation: lessons, strategies, tools.) New York, NY, USA, Promotion of the role of Women in Water and Environmental Sanitation Services, PROWWESS

5. Valadez, J. and Bamberger, M. (1994). Monitoring and Evaluating Social Programs in developing countries: a handbook for policy makers, managers and researchers. (EDI development studies) Washington, DC, USA, World Bank.

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