



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PROJECT

Guidelines for the Assessment of National Sanitation Policies

Myles F. Elledge, Fred Rosensweig, and Dennis B. Warner,
with John H. Austin and Eduardo A. Perez

Environmental Health Project
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Washington, DC 20523





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Strategic Report 2

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by

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Reports and products prepared under the EHP are available at the project’s web site, <http://www.ehproject.org/>.

Abbreviations

CARE	A private international humanitarian organization
DFID	U.K. Department for International Development
DHS	Demographic and Health Surveys
EAWAG	Swiss Federal Institute for Environmental Science and Technology, (SANDEC, Department of Water and Sanitation in Developing Countries)
EHP	Environmental Health Project
IRC	International Water and Sanitation Center, Delft, The Netherlands
MICS	Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PHAST	Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
VIP latrines	Ventilated Improved Pit latrines
WELL2	Resource Center Network for Water, Sanitation and Environmental Health (U.K.)
WHO	World Health Organization
WS&S	Water supply and sanitation
WSSCC	Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council

Preface

More than 2.4 billion people currently lack access to adequate sanitation and are forced to dispose of their excreta in unimproved and unsanitary conditions. Those who suffer from the lack of this most basic of human needs also tend to be victims of poverty, ill health, and an overall poor quality of life. Sanitation is a critical intervention needed to improve living conditions among the world's poor and to reduce or prevent diarrhea and other seriously debilitating conditions, especially among children.

The absence of supportive policies to provide the basis for planning and implementing sanitation programs is a missing link to improving sanitation coverage. These guidelines to assess the adequacy of national sanitation policies are intended to be a practical tool to inventory and evaluate policies. The assessment tool will serve to focus attention on key elements of sound sanitation policy and programming. The guidelines will be particularly useful for policymakers in national governments, staff and consultants of donor agencies, and influential actors involved in supporting policy reform initiatives focused on improving sanitation services. The tool also provides methods guidance for sanitation data collection and tips for completing a field assessment.

The guidelines are the result of a collaborative effort. The USAID Environmental Health Project (EHP) and its partners—including CARE, EAWAG Water & Sanitation in Developing Countries, IRC International Water and Sanitation Center, PAHO, UNICEF, WELL2/DFID, WHO, World Water Council, Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC), and the Water Supply & Sanitation Program—have engaged in a task focused on the assessment of national sanitation policies. A consultant team began work in October 2001 to draft a set of guidelines to assess the adequacy of national sanitation policies in developing countries worldwide. These guidelines were reviewed by EHP and revised for field testing.

The assessment guidelines will be field-tested by many of the partner organizations in late 2002 and 2003. The field tests in selected countries will help establish good practice for the policy assessment and further refine the key elements and the methodology for national or subnational application. Field tests are anticipated to take place in a number of countries and with a range of approaches, including assessment by civil society actors, government policymakers and technicians, external consultants, and donor staff organizations. After the field tests are completed, EHP will revise the guidelines and publish a second edition.

Environmental Health Project (EHP)

Washington, D.C.

1 Introduction

1.1. Overview

This document provides guidelines to assess the adequacy of sanitation policies in developing countries. Sanitation policies are critical to creating an enabling environment that will encourage and support increased access to sanitation services. Coherent and supportive policies provide the basis for planning and implementing sanitation programs; therefore, their absence is considered to be a critical missing element. Yet, despite international efforts to improve sanitation services in the past five years, these services continue to lag far behind water supply services.

Sanitation policies are critical to creating an enabling environment to encourage increased access to sanitation services.

National governments and donor agencies will benefit from a more complete understanding of the requirements of effective sanitation policies. The assessment is seen as the first step in the development of such policies. Following the assessment, the policies themselves will have to be developed and/or refined, the strategy and capacity developed to implement them, and the resources identified to fund them.

Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a practical tool to assess the effectiveness of sanitation policies in order to improve and expand sanitation services for the underserved. The assessment aims to look at the adequacy of national sanitation policies and is focused around four core questions.

Core Questions

- What are the national sanitation policies?
- How adequate are these policies?
- How are these policies translated into programs?
- How effective are these programs in improving services?

The guidelines are intended to guide the assessment process and to facilitate ownership of the policy process. They are intended to be only the starting point in an effort to develop sanitation policies. The audience for these guidelines is policymakers in national governments and staff and consultants of donor agencies that provide support for policy reform efforts.

A central technical component of the assessment is found in Chapter 3: “Key Elements in National Sanitation Policies.” The key elements outline specific “ingredients” of adequate policies and provide a framework for assessing the existing policy environment and conditions. Information gleaned from applying the key elements will help define opportunities to fill in the gaps and strengthen policies and program implementation. Strategic use of these findings will encourage practical steps to improve and expand sanitation coverage and hygiene promotion activities.

1.2. Rationale for the Assessment Guidelines

Over the past five years many external support agencies and some national governments have been advocating the importance of programming sanitation as a critical intervention to reduce or prevent diarrhea, especially among children, and other diseases such as helminths. Efforts have been taken to promote sanitation and seek ways to create political will in support of sanitation programs. In addition, other sanitation programs have been evaluated to determine what lessons have been learned from their successes or failures. These efforts have contributed to sector thinking on principles and best practices, particularly as they relate to community and household-based approaches to sanitation. Many external support agencies and selected national and subnational governments have also implemented and documented pilot sanitation projects that have demonstrated the effectiveness of a particular programming approach, technology, or management model. In summary, significant progress has been made.

But despite these efforts, as the recent Global Water Supply and Sanitation Assessment 2000 Report pointed out, sanitation coverage still lags far behind water supply coverage throughout the developing world. More than 2.4 billion people still lack access to improved sanitation. The majority of these people live in Africa and Asia. In addition, coverage in rural areas is less than half of that in urban areas. The majority (80%) of those lacking adequate sanitation services live in rural areas. To enable over 2 billion people to have access to sanitation by 2015 will require providing services to 384,000 people a day for the next 13 years. The task is daunting.

Significant and, in many cases, growing numbers of rural and urban poor families are living in unhealthy environments because of a lack of access to adequate sanitation and promotion of appropriate hygiene behaviors. It is increasingly recognized that health risks in urban areas are often greater than in dispersed rural areas. Many of the pilot projects have targeted these families, but increasingly it appears that the successful sanitation pilots are not being replicated elsewhere in the country, much less scaled up to a national level.

A number of practitioners and policymakers have come to recognize that a key constraint to replication and scaling up of successful pilot programs has been unclear, contradictory or nonexistent national level sanitation policy frameworks within which national, state, and municipal government agencies, and the private and nonprofit sectors operate. In all but a few countries, the national sanitation framework is not well conceived by policymakers, making the task of those concerned with sanitation provision on a large scale very difficult. National policies can serve as a key stimulus for local action, especially in countries that are decentralized. By articulating needs and promoting the importance of sanitation, these policies serve to set priorities and provide the basis for translating needs into actions. In effect, sanitation policies help to create the conditions in which sanitation services can be improved.

National policies can serve as a key stimulus for local action. . . . These policies serve to set priorities and provide the basis for translating needs into action, creating conditions in which sanitation can be improved.

A desktop review identified three countries that have developed national sanitation policies (South Africa, Nepal, and Uganda).¹ Many other countries are undergoing a WS&S sector reform process, but under close scrutiny, this study found that the majority of these policy and sector reform efforts are, at best, focused on water supply *and* sanitation. Moreover, these efforts are addressed in an ad hoc manner and as an afterthought (especially for the rural and urban poor).

¹ EHP desktop study as part of the activity to develop guidelines to assess sanitation policies. Additional information on South Africa's Sanitation policy is available on the internet at http://www.dwaf.gov.za/dir_ws/content/lids/PDF/summary.pdf.

Development of a National Sanitation Policy in South Africa

South Africa is one of a handful of countries that has developed a strong national sanitation policy. The process began in 1994 with the development of a White Paper on Water Supply and Sanitation Policy that highlighted the importance of developing a national sanitation policy. The National Sanitation Task Team was then formed and published the draft National Sanitation White Paper in 1996. Even though this draft White Paper was never formally approved, it served to launch an initial two-year sanitation program that focused on policy and strategy development, capacity building, the establishment of coordination mechanisms at all levels, and the development of monitoring and evaluation systems. Sanitation implementation on a national scale was started.

In 2001, the National Sanitation Task Team published a National Sanitation Policy document. This comprehensive policy statement defines sanitation, discusses the sanitation problem in South Africa, lists 12 clear policy principles, articulates the strategic interventions, clarifies the institutional arrangements at all levels of government, describes sources of financing, and discusses the importance of monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the policy.

The attention to national sanitation policies has served to galvanize support for sanitation among a range of national agencies and local governments. It has also fostered wide agreement on the approaches and elements to improving access to sanitation services. Nevertheless, the implementation of the policies, especially at the local level, has been uneven. Local governments generally lack the technical, managerial, and financial capacity to address sanitation needs. Programs also tend to focus on facilities and give less attention to software such as health and hygiene. However, South Africa does provide an excellent example of national sanitation policies and how they can be used as a starting point for a national effort to improve access to sanitation services.

In light of the importance of national sanitation policies, EHP/U. S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has developed these guidelines in partnership with a number of other organizations. Although the assessment process is seen as the first step in developing national sanitation policies, it is indeed a critical step with implications for what follows.

Underlying any assessment process is a framework of what is important to assess and ultimately what must be included in the policies to create the enabling environment for sanitation programs to be successful. Thus, these guidelines provide a conceptual basis for not only assessing existing policies, but also for developing new ones that are more effective.

Uganda: Good Sanitation Policy Framework, but Weak Implementation Programs

Over the past 15 years, Uganda has created a dynamic environment for the formulation of sanitation policies that address national needs while taking into account both the constraints and the resources of the national economy. New policies have been established for sanitation in terms of health, water, environment, and local and national governments. However, although these policies were accompanied by considerable political and governmental support when they were first created, the original high levels of enthusiasm and political support have declined somewhat in the last few years. Moreover, implementation programs have not matched the initial enthusiasm for policies, and sanitation services, especially in rural areas and small towns, have received little attention.

Overall, Uganda has a reasonably well-developed framework of national sanitation policies. Laws and regulations have been established or revised to support these policies, a process that is incomplete but currently continuing. The new constitution established in 1996 states that every Ugandan has the right to a clean and healthy environment. In 1997, the Kampala Declaration on Sanitation—considered a major indication of political will—defined 10 areas of action to improve sanitation. There have also been several efforts to develop an official national sanitation policy, the latest being the draft National Environmental Health Policy for Uganda. These policies take into account the needs of differing population groups—urban centers, small towns, rural growth centers, and rural communities—and have led to the preparation of development approaches and technical guidelines that are appropriate to the social and economic conditions of the user communities. These development approaches are based upon sound methodologies (participatory involvement, hygiene education, behavior changes, low-cost technologies, etc.), reflecting the combined inputs of government, donor, and nongovernmental organizations to the policy formulation process.

As statements of well-informed intentions of what government intends to do in Uganda, the national sanitation policies provide good guidance to all organizations concerned with sanitation and a starting point for program planning, budgeting, and eventual field implementation. Responsibility for implementation, however, is found primarily at the local government level, where sanitation rarely receives priority because of competing political, financial, and resource issues. To some extent, the essential follow-on activities are occurring primarily through donor-funded programs for water supply and sanitation. The emphasis, however, tends to be on water supply projects, and funding allocations tend to favor urban over rural areas. Sanitation is not considered as a separate program area, either in funding or project development terms. Moreover, individual households, where sanitation needs are greatest, generally receive no material support for the construction or maintenance of latrines. Promotional and technical guidance for sanitation is available at the household level, but even these means of assistance are inadequate to meet the need.

In summary, national sanitation policies in Uganda are strong in concept, mainly well developed at the national level, and based upon sound, state-of-the-art methodologies, but they are weak at the level of local government. To date, they have had a relatively minor effect on the delivery of improved and expanded sanitation services.

1.3. Policy and Implementation

A sound national sanitation policy is the foundation on which an implementation strategy and action plan will be developed. The strategy will help define details and outline activities based on the policy principles and guidelines, thereby enabling appropriate funding to be sourced, capacity to be developed, and progress to be monitored.

1.4. Definitions

In this document **sanitation** refers to the facilities and hygienic principles and practices related to the safe collection, removal, or disposal of human excreta and domestic wastewater.

Sanitation refers to the facilities and hygienic principles and practices related to the safe collection, removal, or disposal of human excreta.

While this document does not focus on urban drainage, solid waste, or industrial or hospital wastes, it is important to note that these are often mixed with human excreta and wastewater, especially in municipal areas; therefore, the linkages may be inseparable and may have to be taken into account in the assessment. This definition of sanitation does not include the collection and disposal of solid waste or drainage.

Policy is the set of procedures, rules and allocation mechanisms that provide the basis for programs and services. Policies set priorities and often allocate resources for implementation.

Policy is the set of procedures, rules, and allocation mechanisms that provide the basis for programs and services. Policies set priorities and often allocate resources for their implementation. Policies are implemented through four types of policy instruments:

- *Laws and regulations.* Laws generally provide the overall framework, and priorities and regulations provide the more detailed guidance. Regulations are rules or governmental orders designed to control or govern behavior and often have the force of law. Regulations for sanitation can cover a wide range of topics, including the practices of service providers, design standards, tariffs, discharge standards, environmental protection, and contracts. National agencies may also issue official guidelines that serve to define policies.

- *Economic incentives.* Such incentives are subsidies and may also include fines for unsafe disposal, emission charges, and user charges as a result of poor behaviors and practices.
- *Information and education programs.* These programs include public awareness campaigns and educational programs designed to generate demand and public support for efforts to expand sanitation services.
- *Assignment of rights and responsibilities for providing services.* National governments are responsible for determining the roles of national agencies as well as the appropriate roles of the public, private, and nonprofit sectors in program development, implementation, and service delivery.

Although the focus of this document is on national policies, these guidelines recognize that subnational policies must also be considered, especially in large countries and in those that are decentralized. In some countries, state, provincial and local governments play an important policy role and have the resources to plan and implement sanitation programs. The assessment process will determine to what extent subnational levels of government are important players in developing sanitation policies.

1.5. Target Groups for Sanitation Policies

In looking at national sanitation policies and practices, the full picture of sanitation environment in the country will be examined. Recognizing that the impact of inadequate sanitation falls primarily on the poor, these guidelines specifically target three population groups that are historically underserved in the area of sanitation in most countries: rural communities, small towns, and the urban poor. In addition to being underserved, these groups are typically the most at risk for sanitation-related diseases.

Focusing on these three target groups does not mean that the more formal urban areas are necessarily well served. It is, instead, a matter of emphasis: the guidelines focus on the three groups that suffer the most from inadequate services and usually constitute the majority of the population with poor sanitation.

Gender-specific considerations will also need to be taken into account in looking at target groups. In many countries and cultures, women and children are recognized as playing a large and important role in the use and management of household water and the use of household or community sanitary facilities.

Because the focus in this document is on household sanitation, community institutions (e.g., parks, schools, markets and public meeting spaces) are not explicitly included in these guidelines, as institutional roles and financial issues are unique for these entities. Nor do these guidelines explicitly focus on other groups that may also be underserved, such as those in refugee camps or persons displaced by political upheaval or natural disaster. Although services to such groups are important, the

emergency needs of these groups are fundamentally different from the settled populations residing in rural areas, small towns, and urban areas, so they are not the focus of this document. Policies on housing, medical and food supplies, among other concerns in refugee situations, are dealt with quite differently than policies for the majority of the population.

Audience for the Assessment Guidelines

In broad terms, this document is designed for use by three principal groups: those who analyze policies, those who formulate policies at the national and subnational levels, and those who advocate policy change.

Those who analyze policies include the following:

- Staff of national agencies
- National and international consultants funded by host governments, donor agencies, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)
- Donor and NGO staff that may be involved in assessments

Those who formulate policies include the following:

- National and subnational agencies responsible for sanitation (These typically include the water agency and ministries of environment, health, local government, housing, rural development, and planning at the national and state levels, as well as the ministry of urban or regional development.)
- Parliament or similar elected legislative bodies
- State or municipal councils, planning boards or legislative bodies

Those who advocate policy reform include the following:

- NGOs and other civil society groups that have a national focus
- Educational and research institutions

1.6. Uses of the Guidelines

These guidelines are designed primarily for assessing sanitation policies. They can be used as an assessment tool in two basic ways:

- Rapid assessment by an external team over a period of approximately three weeks.

- Assessment by a group of local agency staff over an extended period of time. An external consultant might guide the process, but the actual data collection and analysis would be done by staff of national agencies or civil society organizations.

These two options will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

Although these guidelines are designed primarily for assessing sanitation policies, they can also be used in several other ways:

- As a conceptual basis for designing an initiative to develop national sanitation policies
- As a framework for taking stock of efforts to develop national sanitation policies

1.7. Applicability Across Countries

Countries vary greatly in population, level of development, household incomes, availability of water resources, and many other factors. In large countries such as China, Brazil, India, or Nigeria, the role of subnational government in policy formulation is much greater than in smaller countries. These differences are real and will surely affect how these guidelines are used.

These guidelines have been written to be applicable in most countries despite the wide variations among countries. To the extent possible, the authors have tried to identify the universal factors that must be addressed in almost any situation. For example, it is widely accepted that without political will, sanitation policies will not be effective. The importance of clearly defined institutional roles and responsibilities is also widely accepted. In addition, the document does not attempt to be prescriptive, for example, by promoting specific levels of service, taking a firm position on subsidies, or suggesting what responsibilities should be assigned to different levels of government. These are very context specific.

Despite the attempt to make the document universally applicable, it is likely that some adaptation will be necessary. The assessment team should review the document prior to carrying out the assessment to make any necessary adjustments.

1.8. Assumptions Underlying the Assessment

Several assumptions underpin the assessment guidelines and are reflected throughout the document.

1. *Importance of policy.* Sound sanitation policies are a prerequisite to improving access to services on a scale that matters. Widely accepted and sound policies are an expression of commitment and serve to articulate priorities and allocate resources for implementation. Without such policies in place, efforts to improve

access to services will remain local in scope and will not have the support that is needed to expand efforts on a large scale.

2. *Role of information.* The availability of adequate information is essential to the development of effective sanitation policies. This information includes basic data in such areas as population, coverage, past and current investments, as well as qualitative information from interviews and existing reports. One of the problems in planning programs is that data are often not disaggregated and the high coverage in formal urban areas masks the lack of coverage in poor neighborhoods. To the extent such disaggregated data are available, the assessment will be stronger.
3. *Policy-making process.* An understanding of a country's policy-making process is fundamental to an assessment of the policies themselves. Every country has its own way of making policy. In some countries, the responsible agency or ministry develops policies and, when necessary, these policies are endorsed by a prime minister or president and by elected bodies. Often civil society, usually through NGOs and other civil society groups, serves as a catalyst in highlighting problems and advocating for change. In other countries, national elected officials initiate policies. Many other variations are also possible. It is essential that the assessment team have an understanding of the policy-making process. This will help identify those who should be interviewed by team members, highlight key political economy (power) relationships, and provide a foundation for recommendations to follow up on the assessment.
4. *Building on what exists.* Existing sanitation policies must be considered in any assessment process. Although a country's existing policies may be incomplete, technically unsound, and unrealistic, they offer a starting point and should be built upon whenever possible. The assessment process in this document includes a step in which information about existing policies is collected. It is important to note that national policies can be explicit, as when they are formally written down and codified, but they can also be implicit. This occurs when they are not written down, but government and other organizations generally follow certain approaches and practices.
5. *Role of subnational government.* In some countries, especially those that are decentralized, subnational levels of government have an important role in developing and implementing sanitation policies. Policy is not the sole responsibility of national government. While this assessment is focused on national sanitation policies, it readily acknowledges that the assessment team must also determine to what extent state and local governments also play a role. Clearly, an assessment of local policies is a much bigger task. However, at a minimum, it is important to understand the role played by subnational governments and how national policies must create an enabling environment for state- and local-level policies. These guidelines are designed to be easily adapted for use in subnational-level assessments.

6. *Assessment as a first step in the process.* This assessment is only the first step in the policy development process. As such, it will provide the basis for determining the current situation and what needs to be addressed. Following the assessment, the policy targets should be identified and agreed upon and a program of activities developed to address them. This program can then be implemented over a period of time. Such implementation is likely to include capacity building. Depending on the country, it is reasonable to expect that a national sanitation policy that is technically sound, involves many stakeholders in the development process, and is widely accepted will take one to two years to develop.
7. *Linkages to water supply and other sectors.* Sanitation policies cannot be developed without taking into account a range of sectors. In particular, the guidelines recognize the inseparable linkages to water supply in financing, management of services, hygiene behavior change, and technical considerations. In addition, sanitation policies are also linked to housing, tourism, solid waste, education, environment, and local government. The fact that the document is focused on sanitation should not be interpreted as a lack of appreciation for the very tight linkages between sanitation and water supply and the other sectors. Throughout the document, references are made to identify these linkages and the points where they need to be considered.
8. *Capacity to implement policies.* Because countries have varying capacities and resources to implement policies, policies cannot be assessed without taking these factors into account. It is entirely possible to have a policy that looks very good on paper but is unrealistic to implement in that country; therefore, the capacity to implement the policy must be part of the assessment process. A good policy will go beyond the paper it is written on.

1.9. Organization of the Document

This document is divided into four sections:

- Section 1. The introduction.
- Section 2. This chapter details the basic information that should be collected. It includes basic coverage and financial data, existing policies, and the policy-making process. For the most part, this information can be collected as the first step in the process.
- Section 3. The substantive core of the assessment tool is in Section 3. This section includes the key elements of national sanitation policies and questions to assess each one.
- Section 4. This section describes the methodology for conducting the assessment. It includes the skills required, the steps that must be carried out, the nature of the report that documents the results of the assessment, and other tips for carrying out the assessment.

- Section 5. This section provides guidance on what should happen after the assessment.

2 Background Information

2.1. The Need for Background Information

The assessment of national sanitation policies takes place within the context of the overall water supply and sanitation sector. Therefore, understanding this sector and how it relates to national development is essential to the assessment process. Without a basic knowledge of what has happened in sanitation and what influences its development, assessment teams will need to spend additional time developing this information and may overlook key issues influencing sanitation policy formulation.

For that reason, a starting point of background information is needed to provide specific data affecting the assessment process and to provide a general understanding of the policy environment within which sanitation development occurs. Both of these purposes are components of the assessment process, and both contribute to the assessment of national sanitation policies.

2.2. Types of Information

There are three general types of information. The first is statistics, such as figures for population, health indices, and water and sanitation coverage. These data can be found in periodic reports of the national governments or through the United Nations and its specialized agencies. Additional information can usually be obtained directly from local data sources, the global and country offices of the World Health Organization (WHO), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the UN Development Program (UNDP), and the World Bank. One useful source of data is the *Global Water Supply and Sanitation Assessment 2000 Report* carried out by WHO and UNICEF for the year 2000. A summary of the data is contained in the report of the assessment, but more detailed national data can be obtained directly from WHO and UNICEF, or from the internet at <http://www.childinfo.org/>.

A second category of information consists of financial data relating to program and project costs, budgets, and sources of investment funds. This information is usually available from government offices (ministries of finance, development, health, education, water development, etc.). Often, it can also be found in program appraisal documents or assessment reports prepared by international agencies and bilateral donors.

The third category of information is descriptive in nature and includes a summary of the policy formulation process, as well as the identification of relevant policies, laws, and ordinances affecting sanitation services. Also included in this category is the list

of institutions having responsibilities for sanitation development. These should include all relevant institutions, whether governmental, external, NGO, or private sector.

One note of caution on the collection and use of data: Data is available from a variety of sources, so cross-checking is advisable. The basis on which data and statistics were collected and prepared is not necessarily the one most appropriate for the immediate data requirements of a policy assessment. Be aware of possible errors, and treat data as only indicative rather than definitive.

2.3. Data Collection

The choice of information collected prior to the start of the assessment should be based on its potential contribution to understanding the current status of sanitation policy in the country. This highlights the need for clarity and relevance of data. Too little or too much information at the start of the assessment can prevent the team from identifying and focusing on the main issues. Background information, therefore, should provide the assessment leaders with a starting point for investigating the key elements in national sanitation policies. The data and information outlined in this chapter represent a suggested starting point for the assessment. Depending on the country, the need for background information may involve more or less data than indicated here.

There are a number of ways in which the background information can be assembled. It can be compiled over a period of weeks or even months by one or more government offices or by the staff of an external agency or an NGO. One approach is to have one individual from an assessment task force or team spend up to a week visiting the relevant ministries and agencies to collect the documents, reports, and other basic data needed. This information then would be summarized into the format given below (or a similar format) and made available to all team members for review before the start of the field assessment. The sources of the data (e.g., report, government interview, agency budget) should be noted, along with the applicable date. The names of key informants interviewed may also be useful for later follow-up discussions. The full reports and other sources of information from which the data are drawn should be made available to the assessment team members for further review as needed.

Often sources available at the country or international level present overall data for the whole country and may lack identification or segregation of disparities within the country. Close examination of these disparities is required.

The following discuss specific information to be collected.

2.4. Area and Population

Purpose

To provide basic information needed to define the need for sanitation services.

Data Needs

Core information for each country includes geographic area, current population, and population growth rates (Table 1).

Table 1. Area and Population

Country	=	_____	
Area of country	=	_____	km ²
Population	=	_____	(date)
<i>Men</i>	=	_____	(date)
<i>Women</i>	=	_____	(date)
Total Urban	=	_____	
<i>Men</i>	=	_____	(date)
<i>Women</i>	=	_____	(date)
Total Rural	=	_____	
<i>Men</i>	=	_____	(date)
<i>Women</i>	=	_____	(date)
Growth rate	=	_____	%/yr

Data Sources

These data can be obtained from local sources, as well as from the United Nations publication, *World Population Prospects Health Indicators*.

2.5. Health Indicators

Purpose

To determine the health impacts of the lack of sanitation coverage.

Data Needs

General health indicators include life expectancy and infant and child mortality rates (Table 2). The latter rates are closely linked to the levels of sanitation found in households and communities and their impact upon the health of children. The best

health indicator directly related to the lack of sanitation services is diarrheal disease prevalence (two weeks recall). In addition, data on cholera rates is valuable for understanding the degree of health-related sanitation problems, and subnational data on disease rates may identify “hot-spots” within the country. Data on helminth-related problems is also important to understanding the problems caused by the lack of sanitation coverage.

Country data can be obtained from the Ministry of Health or from the offices of WHO, UNICEF, and the World Bank, among other international agencies. Regional data, which are used for comparison purposes, can be obtained from WHO.

Table 2. Health Indicators

Life expectancy	=	_____	years
<i>Men</i>	=	_____	years
<i>Women</i>	=	_____	years
Infant mortality rate (IMR)	=	_____	infant deaths/1000 live births
Child mortality rate (CMR)	=	_____	child deaths under 5 years/1000 live births
Regional averages: (select appropriate region)			
Infant mortality rate	=	_____	infant deaths/1000 live births
Child mortality rate	=	_____	child deaths under 5 yrs/1000 live births
Diarrheal disease prevalence		_____	percentage (%) children under 5 with diarrhea

Data Sources

One of the best sources is the USAID-funded Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) and the Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey (MICS) carried out by UNICEF in collaboration with national governments. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) may also have subnational or local data to inform understanding where there are thought to be significant differences across regions and localities.

2.6. Coverage

Purpose

To determine the number of people without access to adequate sanitation services and, as a result, the scale of the problem.

Data Needs

Coverage describes the number of people with access to an improved water supply or to a sanitation facility that provides adequate disposal of human excreta. As defined in the *Global Water Supply and Sanitation Assessment 2000 Report*, access to water supply includes house connections, public standpipes, boreholes with hand pumps,

protected dug wells, protected springs, and rainwater collection providing at least 20 liters of water per person per day from a source within one kilometer of the house. Access to sanitation is defined to include connections to sewers or to adequate and hygienic on-site disposal systems, including septic tanks, pour-flush latrines, simple pit latrines, and ventilated improved pit (VIP) latrines. Individual household facilities and, where it is culturally appropriate, well-maintained communal or shared facilities may also be included.

These definitions do not consider water supplies to be improved if they consist of unprotected wells and springs or water provided by vendors or from tanker trucks. Similarly, sanitation facilities are not defined as improved if they are based on bucket latrines, public latrines, or unprotected open pit latrines. Table 3 illustrates the coverage information that should be obtained for a country assessment.

In addition to coverage, key data include population projections over time and coverage targets to the year 2015. Coverage targets for 2015 were selected by the Second World Water Council in March 2000 as a global reference point for all countries to consider. These targets for 2015 are defined as a reduction by 50 percent in the proportion of people without access to hygienic sanitation facilities and a reduction by 50 percent in those without access to adequate quantities of affordable and safe water. By including the national coverage targets for 2015 in the background information for the sanitation policy assessment team, the magnitude of sanitation needs is clearly denoted.

Population projections should be recorded in Table 4, coverage trends in Table 5, and coverage targets in Table 6.

Table 3. Current Coverage (in thousands)

	A	B	C	D	E	F
Sanitation	Population	Pop. Connected to Public Sewer	Pop. with Adequate On-Site System	Population Served	Population Unserved or Inadequate Systems	% Pop. Served
Urban				B+C	A-D	D/A*100
Rural						
Total						
Water Supply	Population	Pop. with House Connection	Pop. with Public Waterpoint	Population Served	Population Unserved	% Pop. Served
Urban						
Rural						
Total						

Table 4. Population Projections (in thousands)

Population	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015
Urban					
<i>Men</i>					
<i>Women</i>					
<i>Total</i>					
Rural					
<i>Men</i>					
<i>Women</i>					
<i>Total</i>					
Total					
<i>Men</i>					
<i>Women</i>					

Table 5. Coverage Trends (in thousands)

Sanitation (Year)	Total Population	Population Served	Population Unserved	% Pop. Served
Urban 1990				
Rural 1990				
Total 1990				
Urban 2000				
Rural 2000				
Total 2000				
Water Supply	Total Population	Population Served	Population Unserved	% Pop. Served
Urban 1990				
Rural 1990				
Total 1990				
Urban 2000				
Rural 2000				
Total 2000				

Table 6. Coverage Targets (in thousands)

Target Area	Target Population (Yr 2015)	% Served
Urban sanitation		
- Urban sanitation (public sewer)		
- Urban sanitation (on-site disposal)		
Rural sanitation		
Urban water		
Rural water		

Data Sources

Sources for coverage data include national statistical offices, ministries of health and other ministries, the *Global Water Supply and Sanitation Assessment 2000 Report*, as well as the country offices of WHO and UNICEF, and on the internet at <http://www.childinfo.org>. Population projections can be taken from *World Population Prospects*.

2.7. Performance Aspects

Purpose

To provide information on the degree to which improperly operated WS&S systems contribute to sanitation-related health risks.

Data Needs

Information on the operational aspects of sanitation systems includes the proportion of wastewater collected by sewer systems that is treated. For water systems, core information includes the proportion of piped urban water systems that provide intermittent, rather than continuous, supplies of water. Related measures are the proportion of urban water systems that use disinfection (e.g., chlorination, ozonation) and the proportion of rural water systems that are currently functioning. Table 7 outlines the information to be collected.

Table 7. Water and Sanitation System Operations

Treatment of wastewater from public sewers	=	_____	% of total sewage
Urban water systems with intermittent supply	=	_____	% of systems
Urban water systems using disinfection	=	_____	% of systems
Rural water systems functioning	=	_____	% of systems
Do national drinking water standards exist?	=	_____	(yes/no)
Briefly describe how the national standards compare to the International Guidelines for Drinking Water Quality (WHO, 1993):			

Data Sources

Information on the operational issues may be obtained from the ministries of water and of health. Information on national water quality standards may be obtained from the main national laboratory responsible for carrying out drinking water quality analyses. Information may also be available from WHO and UNICEF as part of the data collected for the *Global Water Supply & Sanitation Assessment 2000 Report*, while in-country data on operations may also be available from the ministries of water and of health. Information on national water quality standards should be sought from the main laboratory responsible for carrying out drinking water quality analyses.

2.8. Costs

Purpose

To provide basic information needed to estimate the amount of investment capital for improved services.

Data Needs

Cost data include unit capital and recurrent costs, water and sewerage tariffs, and average household expenditures for water and sanitation services. The unit capital costs should be based on water and sanitation commonly built in the country. Water and sewerage tariffs, where levied, are averages for the country as a whole. Household expenditures for water and sanitation services should be based on the total paid to water and sanitation utilities, as well as on the amounts paid to vendors and private contractors. The tables shown below define costs in terms of U.S. dollars. It also may be practical to show costs in local currency.

Table 8. Unit Capital and Recurrent Costs (US\$/person)

Sanitation	Construction ²	Maintenance (per yr) ³
Conventional sewer with house connection		
Small bore sewer		
Septic tank		
Pour-flush latrine		
VIP latrine		
Simple pit latrine		
Water Supply	Construction	Maintenance (per yr)
Piped system with house connection		
Public standpost		
Borehole with hand pump		
Protected dug well		
Protected spring		
Rainwater collection		

Table 9. Average Household Expenditures for Water and Sanitation Services (US\$/month/household)

Sanitation	Cost	Water Supply	Cost
Public sewer		House connection	
On-site disposal		Public standpipe	

Data Sources

The above data are available from lead national technical agencies and might also be obtained from such international agencies as PAHO, WHO and UNICEF. Often, cost data are difficult to obtain, and simple estimates may be the best figures available.

2.9. Investments

Purpose

To determine the amount of capital investment for sanitation, the degree to which sanitation is a central government priority, and an estimate of the financial needs.

² Construction costs = total capital costs per person served

³ Maintenance costs = total annual maintenance costs per person served

Data Needs

Investments in the water supply and sanitation sector should be gauged against the overall need to provide access to safe and adequate quantities of water and to hygienic sanitation facilities (Table 10). They also may be estimated by applying the unit costs of minimum acceptable levels of service to the total unserved population. The national government has the responsibility of defining acceptable minimum levels of service. In the absence of an established definition, it is suggested that the definition used in the *Global Water Supply and Sanitation Assessment 2000 Report* be adopted, i.e., private or shared access to a sewer or septic tank system, pour-flush latrine, simple pit latrine, or VIP latrine that hygienically separates human excreta from human contact.

Information is also needed on current annual investments into water and sanitation from all sources (Table 11). This includes funds originating from the central government (national institutions) and local government (subnational institutions), household contributions, and external sources, including both grants and loans. To the extent possible, these investments should be broken down into urban and rural activities. It is not unusual, for example, that households provide 100 percent of the investment in sanitation in rural areas.

Lastly, the specific government budgets in sanitation, at both the central and local levels, should be quantified. There are three areas of concern: capital costs of new construction of sanitation facilities, program costs of running government sanitation agencies, and operation and maintenance costs of the sanitation facilities (Table 12). As in the case of cost data, budget breakdowns may be difficult to determine without some general estimations. As part of program costs, it is important here to aim to identify costs allocated towards hygiene promotion and advocacy, as both “software” and hardware dimensions are of critical importance.

For uniformity, the tables present costs in U.S. dollars; however, it may be more practical to give them in local currency units.

Table 10. Estimate of Overall Investment Needs for Sanitation

Total capital costs to meet national sanitation needs	=	_____	US\$
Annual costs to meet national sanitation needs	=	_____	US\$/yr

Table 11. Sources of Current Investment (US\$/yr)

Sanitation Funds	National Institutions	Sub-national Institutions	Households	External Donors/Lenders	Total
Urban					
Rural					
Total					
Water Supply Funds	National Institutions	Sub-national Institutions	Households	External Donors/Lenders	Total
Urban					
Rural					

Table 12. Current Government Allocations for Sanitation (US\$/yr)

Administrative Level	Capital Costs	Program Costs	Maintenance Costs	Total
National agencies				
Subnational agencies				
Total				

Data Sources

Data for Table 10 and Table 11 may be available from ministries dealing with finance or with development planning.

Data for Table 12 may be available from the Ministry of Finance or from the ministries dealing with the implementation of sanitation programs.

2.10. Policy and Institutions

Purpose

To ensure that the basic written policy documents are collected, the key institutions identified, and the policy-making process understood.

Data Needs

The third and final category of background information consists of descriptions of the policy framework and institutions supporting sanitation development (see Box on following page). The policy framework includes the existing legal instruments (laws, legislative acts, decrees, regulations, and official guidelines), as well as current political concerns (presidential statements, electoral promises, public activism). The relevant policies should be identified and documented for the assessment team to review in detail.

Major Policies

List and briefly describe the major policies, laws, decrees, regulations, guidelines, and development plans involving sanitation.

Similarly, the institutions active in the development of WS&S services at both national and subnational levels should be identified. Institutional involvement in sanitation may include funding, planning, construction, operations, and training. Moreover, government bodies, international organizations, donor agencies, and NGOs may conduct the services.

A final question should be explored as part of background information. A summary description of the processes by which national policies are formulated is needed. This should include a description of the sequential steps usually followed, the types of policy instruments produced, the ministries involved in the process, and the involvement of the general public. This information will allow the team to determine the salience of interviews with stakeholders.

Data Sources

There is no single source for policy-related information. Such information will be obtained from the national constitution, legislation, institutional policy documents, and knowledgeable individuals.

There is also no single source for information on sanitation institutions. However, discussions with government officials and representatives of NGOs and external

Key Institutions

List and briefly describe the key sector institutions at both national and sub-national levels in each of the following target areas. Include all relevant institutions: government bodies, international organizations, the private sector, and NGOs.

- Urban sanitation
- Small town sanitation
- Rural sanitation
- Urban water supply
- Small town water supply
- Rural water supply

Describe the general processes followed in the formulation of national policies. Indicate how policies are created and established, what legal form they take, which ministries are usually involved, and the role of the public in the process.

agencies will quickly uncover the main organizations.

Information on the policy-making process is likely to be qualitative in nature and gathered by asking several knowledgeable people.

3

Key Elements in National Sanitation Policies

The key elements are information and guidance for examining national sanitation policies and their adequacy. These key elements present a range of issues recognized as important components of good sanitation policies. Given the multifaceted nature of sanitation issues, application of the key elements during an assessment of policies requires a thorough review of numerous factors, sectors, and stakeholders. Flexibility in the use of this document is also required, as the coverage of the elements during an assessment of policies will need to be adapted to match the setting in a given country.

3.1. Political Will

Political will refers to the support given to policies by politicians, government officials, and representatives of influential organizations. This support can be manifested in a variety of ways, including:

- public statements,
- the passage of legislation,
- the establishment of relevant institutions, and
- the provision of resources to carry out sanitation-related policies.

Policies reside in multiple sectors, for example, in the health sector, with the Ministry of Environment or in urban sector policy and regulations. Political will may be influenced by human resource commitments, budget allocations, high profile events, or voting. Understanding the nature and level of political will for sanitation issues and the implementation of sanitation programs for the underserved will help in assessing awareness, evaluating the depth of support, and identifying stakeholders.

Although awareness and expressions of interest in sanitation by influential individuals are necessary components of political will, they are not sufficient. To be effective, political will for sanitation must include expressions of concern for sanitation needs, promotion of sanitation concepts, advocacy for policy change, government resources for implementation of improved services, and an interest in reaching the underserved. The effectiveness of political will, therefore, should be based on the contribution it makes to the establishment and implementation of sanitation policies.

1. What kinds of political support are there for national sanitation policies?

This element is concerned with statements and activities that show political interest in and support for sanitation. These may include explicit public statements by political leaders, as well as implicit political support through the establishment of sanitation-related institutions and activities. Examples of political support can include:

- public statements by the president and other key political leaders;
- statements contained in political party platforms;
- active discussion of sanitation in political discourse;
- the formation of sanitation-related committees within political parties, national ministries, and local government;
- the establishment of institutions to support sanitation; and

- the allocation of government resources in capital and recurrent budgets.

Political support can be demonstrated at both the national and subnational levels. Of course, broad-based political support is more effective than support from a narrow range of the political spectrum.

2. *How important is this support and how is it influenced?*

This assesses local opinions on the effects of different types of political support on the formation and implementation of national sanitation policies.

Representatives of the major sanitation stakeholders—including national ministries, local government, public utilities, donor agencies, and private sector and sanitation consumers, or users—should be approached for their opinions.

3. *What additional support is needed?*

This question refers to the type of political support that is needed, but not currently available, in order to make national sanitation policies and their implementation adequate. A qualitative statement or judgment will help illustrate the nature of policy debate and implementation challenges.

4. *What momentum is present or prevailing?*

This asks about new trends or the political “hot” issues that may be present and how these issues might influence support for national sanitation policies and their implementation. For example, priority attention focused around a temporary water shortage, a disaster, or cholera epidemic may serve to invigorate dialogue on sanitation policy and raise commitment to addressing the needs of the underserved.

5. *Has there been the creation of national budget items indicative of political will to support national sanitation policies?*

6. *Are strategies in place to insure policy implementation by those directly involved in service provision?*

3.2. Acceptance of Policies

Sanitation policies that are accepted by stakeholders give an indication of relevancy, and those that are accepted will most likely be effective in guiding changes in sanitation services. Policies have legitimacy to the extent that all stakeholders (including political leaders, government officials, donor representatives, the private sector, and men and women in the general public) are aware of them and accept them as a valid expression of current government actions and future intentions. The acceptance of policies also means a general agreement with the purpose of the policies. This acceptance is best secured when stakeholders have a role in formulating the policies and in participating in making informed decisions. It is important to determine the degree to which stakeholders both accept and agree with national sanitation policies and how this acceptance was achieved.

1. ***Were the relevant and appropriate stakeholders involved in the formulation of national sanitation policies? Does the stakeholder involvement translate into clear support or action?***

The stakeholders are defined as political leaders, ministry officials, technicians, donors, representatives of local government, the private sector, and men and women in the general public. Involvement means having some input into the process of formulating policies. Where there is substantial involvement, there is more opportunity to gain understanding and potential to reach consensus or acceptance on policies.

2. ***Do all relevant institutions agree with the policies? Is there a shared vision of sanitation policy? How long have policy agreements been in place?***

As part of basic data collection, an inventory should be conducted of key policies, laws, and regulations and the date each was put in place. Mapping agreement and acceptance across actors and institutions will often be informative.

3. ***Does the general public know about the policies and agree with them? Do they accept the basic principles underlying policies? Do the policies accurately reflect a focus on the underserved populations?***

The general public refers to men, women and children, that is, the consumers or users of sanitation services, both those with adequate services and those without. Acceptance means that there are indications that the public supports the policies and wants them to be implemented.

4. ***What specific factors led to the acceptance of the policies?***
5. ***What methods were used to involve stakeholders and to obtain acceptance of the policies?***

- 6. Following acceptance, are the policies now being applied and supported? Do stakeholders retain commitment and feel empowered? Are they active in supporting and implementing policies and regulations?*

3.3. Legal Framework

A major aspect of legitimacy for sanitation policies is the legality of the policy statements. There should be a legal basis in the form of laws, legislative acts, decrees, regulations, and official guidelines. To be comprehensive, this basis should encompass the full range of legal instruments, from the essential legal statutes to the practical technical guidance materials used to implement the policies. Without a legal framework to guide overall policy implementation, sanitation programs and projects run the risk of violating societal norms and failing to address the objectives for which the policies were established.

1. *Does the existing legal framework adequately govern sanitation? Are existing regulations appropriate? Or do existing regulations conflict with desired outcomes for sanitation policy, sanitation programs, and the key target groups?*
2. *Are national sanitation policies based on appropriate levels of legality? Are there barriers or obstacles resulting from the legal basis for sanitation?*

The policies should have a legal basis; that is, they should be supported by laws, legislative acts, official decrees, or official regulations. Without a legal basis, the policies can be seen as lacking a supporting regulatory environment and may be subject to arbitrary actions.

3. *Are these policies sufficiently comprehensive to allow institutions to develop strategies and action plans to act upon them? Are the roles and responsibilities clear and appropriately assigned to institutions?*

Policies should lead to action. The establishment of policies, therefore, should indicate how subsequent strategies and action plans can or should occur. Without such indications, which can be either explicit in the policies or implicit in national practices, policies may contain only wishful thinking and represent a political dead-end.

4. *Are these national sanitation policies compatible with other relevant national policies and regulations, for example, environment, public health, education, and decentralization?*
5. *Are the sanitation policies more appropriate for one or more target groups or areas?*

Laws and their level of appropriateness for urban areas, small towns, and rural areas should be reviewed.

6. *Does the national or state-level government intervene when national sanitation policies are not implemented?*

7. *Do laws or by-laws cover responsibilities of landlords in providing safe sanitation facilities for tenants?*

This is especially important in peri-urban areas as many poor people live in rented accommodations.

3.4. Population Targeting

Sanitation services usually are designed to serve the needs of specific population groups. Three population groups generally need priority attention because of their inadequate sanitation services. These groups, which can be found in almost all developing countries, are the urban poor in large cities (especially in the poor and peri-urban areas of large cities), residents of small towns, and most of the rural population. National sanitation policies should specifically target such groups when it can be shown that they are underserved in comparison to other groups, such as the urban elites and wealthy populations in general.

Some countries may also have particular population groups that require special attention. These groups may include, for example, refugee settlements or internally displaced persons (IDPs).⁴ Women also have a particularly important role to play in sanitation since they are often the primary collectors, transporters, and users of domestic water and promoters of domestic sanitary activities. The national sanitation policies should recognize such groups when they constitute a significant proportion of the population in need of improved services. Population targeting involves not only statements of priority but also meaningful action programs and budgets.

1. ***Do the policies explicitly target the three main population groups: urban poor in large cities, residents of small towns, and inhabitants of rural communities? Alternatively, are these three groups clearly included in the intent of the policies? Are there other population groups with special needs?***

Conventional sanitation policies, when available, often target the urban rich who are capable of paying for high-cost services. The poor, both urban and rural, tend to be ignored when sanitation policies and programs are formulated. The primary purpose of the new guidelines is to encourage the formulation of sanitation policies and programs that address the needs of population groups that were poorly served in the past.

2. ***Are the particular needs of each target group taken into account?***

The three population groups identified above, as well as any other population groups with special needs, should be considered to be the priority beneficiaries for sanitation assistance. Since each group has different needs regarding household sanitation, wastewater disposal, and family hygiene, it is important that the policies recognize these needs so that appropriate actions can be taken to serve them.

3. ***Are there programs and budgets for the targeted groups?***

The clearest evidence of meaningful support for national sanitation policies is the existence of sanitation programs with appropriate budgetary components and

⁴ However, these guidelines are not focused on these groups.

appropriate institutional structures. Without such support, implementation of policies cannot occur.

3.5. Levels of Service

The delivery of sanitation services may range from indoor flush toilets connected to sewers to simple pit latrines located some distance from the house. In most cases, the level of service is determined by service costs, the economic status of communities and households, and the willingness of users to pay or otherwise contribute to the installation of a sanitation system. The availability of water—as a transporting agent, a cleaning agent, or a personal hygiene agent—also affects the level of service that can be provided. Other factors that influence the level of service are convenience, status (in terms of attractiveness and modernity), and perceptions of health impacts. To be sustainable, the minimum adequate levels of service for any given community are determined by all of the above factors.

It is not advisable to be prescriptive here in defining a minimum level of service. Each country must determine its own minimum adequate service levels appropriate to the health, economic, and social conditions of the communities. These may include:

- indoor flush toilets;
- detached pour-flush toilets;
- ventilated improved pit (VIP) latrines; or
- simple pit latrines.

In general, sanitation services can be considered adequate when they protect health and contribute to the welfare of the community. The health aspects are covered when the sanitation facility effectively isolates human excreta and household wastewater from contact with and contamination of water supplies, food, people, and animals. In this way, the chain of contamination (fecal to oral) is interrupted.

The welfare aspects are covered when the sanitation facility assists the user to be a more effective and integrated member of the community. It will vary for different communities. However, dirty or inaccessible facilities constrain the individual from fully participating in community activities, while accessible and attractive facilities contribute to a process of improvement and modernization.

1. Are minimum adequate service levels defined for the three targeted population groups, as well as for any other specially targeted groups? What are the minimum sanitation service standards for the country?

The proposed services should be appropriate to the sanitation needs of the targeted groups. For example, households with large quantities of piped water supply will need sanitation systems capable of removing large quantities of wastewater, while households with small quantities of water carried from distant sources may be able to utilize on-site disposal methods. In all cases, however, the

sanitation services should have health and environmental considerations as a first priority.

2. *Are the proposed sanitation services appropriate for the existing and planned water supply services?*

Acceptable systems reflect effective demand, which is a measure of informed choices by the users. Effective demand implies that the users of sanitation services are fully aware of the technologies and associated costs of the service levels available to them. In making their choices of sanitation systems, users demonstrate the concept of effective demand when the choices are based on full knowledge. As indicated above, sanitation service levels should be linked to water supply service levels in order to ensure the proper operation of sanitation systems and to maintain the sanitary protection of water supplies. A mismatch between sanitation and water services may have serious health and environmental consequences.

3. *Are the proposed sanitation services acceptable and affordable to the target groups (consumers)?*

Experience shows that sanitation services (systems, technologies, social controls) that are not acceptable to the users will not be properly used and maintained. Acceptability may be affected by cultural practices, social preferences, affordability, and convenience. Since the various target groups have different sanitation needs, a sanitation service acceptable to one group may not be acceptable to another group. Sanitation services should be based on the concept of effective demand.

4. *Are there programs to provide information to enable consumers to make informed decisions about levels of service?*

Because of the very tight linkage between level of service and financial sustainability, it is critical for consumers to make an informed decision about the level of service they are willing to pay for. Methods to provide this information to consumers can include public information announcements, campaigns, brochures, posters, as well as community meetings.

5. *Are the proposed sanitation services acceptable to the program implementers and service providers?*

Similarly, the implementers and providers of sanitation services, which include government technical agencies, public utilities, utilities, and the private sector, must be willing and able to support the proposed sanitation services. They need to understand the proposed technologies and levels of service, and they need to actively promote and implement them in the field. The overall audience for policy formulation and implementation includes the users of sanitation services, the providers of sanitation facilities, and the planners and analysts who work directly with policy issues.

3.6. Health Considerations

The health impacts of sanitation are the primary reason to develop sanitation policies. Adverse health impacts can result from unsanitary handling, disposal, or reuse of human excreta and domestic wastewater. Although decisions may be made on the basis of service levels, convenience, costs, and regulatory factors, the health consequences of sanitation systems should be the key rationale for the formulation of sanitation policies. These policies should guide the subsequent implementation of sanitation programs so as to encourage the desired health outcomes.

To accomplish this, the policies should address identified sanitation-related health concerns, such as diarrheal rates, infant mortality, helminth infections, and cholera epidemics. It is essential that the general public become aware of the problems that arise from poor sanitation and understand the role that proper sanitation services can play to address these problems. The overall capacity of the Ministry of Health usually is crucial in the establishment and implementation of effective sanitation policies. The balance established by the Ministry of Health between providing preventative and primary health care services versus curatives services will also be a factor.

1. Is health an explicit component of national sanitation policies?

The primary purpose of good household sanitation is to protect the residents and the community from infectious diseases contained in human excreta and domestic wastewater. If the national sanitation policies fail to recognize this purpose, they are not likely to focus on the health needs of the target groups.

2. Are health-related problems clearly understood? Is there a clear understanding of the magnitude and specific nature of the health problems arising from poor sanitation?

The policies should lead to the establishment of appropriate sanitation programs for implementation. This can only be done if the extent and magnitude of the health problems related to poor sanitation are known. This understanding of the problems may include considerations of populations at risk, health indicators, and overall costs (social, economic, and political). The interview should indicate how this understanding has been obtained.

3. Do the sanitation policies address the main health problems?

Just as differing population groups require targeting, so also do the particular sanitation-related health problems. Sanitation policies should be formulated to direct programs and implementation efforts to address the main health problems resulting from poor sanitation. In general, diarrheal diseases are the most important health problem caused by poor sanitation, but they are not the only ones. If diarrhea of children under five years of age is a key health problem, the sanitation policies should lead to the establishment of programs emphasizing

hygiene behavior change, protection of household water supplies, and sanitary management of excreta in the household environment.

4. *What is the role of the Ministry of Health in national sanitation policy formulation and implementation?*

The Ministry of Health will almost always be one of the key national agencies involved in formulating sanitation policies. In some countries, it may be the lead agency. In implementing sanitation policies, responsibility is often divided among a number of government ministries and service organizations. In general, ministries of health usually are in charge of household-level sanitation when it involves on-site disposal, such as septic tanks and pit latrines, while off-site disposal requiring sewer connections tends to be under the control of ministries of water or of municipalities or public utilities. Despite the limited roles that ministries of health have in the direct implementation of sanitation services, they usually retain considerable responsibility for maintaining a critical overview of health conditions associated with these services. This health role should be identified in the assessment.

5. *To what extent are targeted population groups involved in deliberations on health problems and on sanitation problems?*

Since the targeted population groups are, in effect, the primary audience for improved sanitation services, they should be an integral part of the identification of both sanitation-related health problems and acceptable sanitation solutions. Hygiene promotion programs need to be carefully planned based on local conditions, knowledge and practices.⁵ Participatory approaches such as the Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation (PHAST) Initiative promoted by WHO and the Water and Sanitation Program of the World Bank offer a structured methodology for encouraging participation by community groups in identifying problems and planning responses.⁶ Other less-structured approaches can also provide opportunities for targeted groups to influence sanitation policies and programs. The extent of involvement of targeted groups is a major factor in the sustainability of sanitation services.

⁵ <http://www.unicef.org/programme/wes/pubs/glines/hygman.htm>

⁶ http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/environmental_sanit/PHAST/PHASTindex.htm

3.7. Environmental Considerations

Increasingly, sanitation is being seen as a major issue in environmental protection. Improper disposal of human wastes can pollute water bodies, groundwater, and land surfaces, causing great risks to health and impacting the local economy, and such practices can adversely affect general aesthetics and the overall quality of life for those living in the vicinity. A growing problem in many countries is the economic effect of environmental degradation on tourism, fisheries, and other industries sensitive to pollution. The most serious problems occur when large quantities of human excreta are concentrated in limited areas, such as sewer outfalls, sludge beds, and septic tank disposal sites.

Other problems may arise from excessive amounts of nonhuman wastes, such as animal feed lots, abattoirs, markets, and food processing activities. In some cases, the re-use of wastewater may protect the environment by reducing the concentration of pollutants, thereby encouraging water conservation. In addition, unchecked environmental degradation may increase the vulnerability of an area to natural disasters, such as droughts, floods, and soil erosion. Thus, it is important that the potential problems be recognized and some knowledge of their magnitude and costs be available. There should be a lead ministry or agency responsible for the environmental issues related to sanitation.

1. Is environment an explicit component of national sanitation policies?

The protection of the environment from pollution and degradation caused by poor management of human excreta is another major goal of national sanitation policies. Unless the policies recognize this goal, there is the strong likelihood that the environment will be overlooked in the development and implementation of sanitation programs.

2. Is there a clear understanding of the magnitude of the sanitation-related environmental problems?

As in the case of health considerations, the policies should lead to the establishment of appropriate sanitation programs for implementation. This can only be done if the extent and magnitude of the environmental problems related to poor sanitation are known. This may include considerations of the types of environmental problems, geographical areas of concern, and overall costs (social, economic, and political).

3. Do the sanitation policies address the main environmental problems?

The policies should recognize that different sanitation technologies and systems will have differing environmental consequences. Environmental problems can include adverse changes to the land (soil pollution, soil erosion), water bodies (fish kills, degraded drinking water, polluted irrigation water), and even the domestic environment (vector breeding sites, contaminated surfaces). For

example, for piped sewerage systems and wastewater treatment plants, policymakers will need to consider the effects of ultimate discharge of treated wastewaters into natural water bodies, while on-site excreta disposal may lead to concerns over localized contamination of groundwater supplies and shallow wells. It is essential that the main environmental problems be identified and targeted.

4. What is the role of the Ministry of Environment in national sanitation policy formulation and implementation?

The Ministry of Environment often has primary responsibility for overseeing sanitation activities that directly impact upon the environment. Specifically, ministries of environment have an important regulatory role in setting wastewater effluent standards and in monitoring regulatory compliance. In some countries, ministries of environment also provide financing for wastewater treatment. Regulation by the Ministry of Environment may be minimal regarding household-level sanitation activities, especially in the case of simple on-site systems. As ministries of environment usually do not provide direct services to communities and households, their official role and influence on sanitation policy formulation and implementation may be limited. The assessment, therefore, should specifically address the role of the Ministry of Environment to determine how it is functioning regarding sanitation policies.

3.8. Financial Considerations

The financial issues related to national sanitation policies include:

- the capital costs required for sanitation infrastructure and facilities,
- recurrent costs required to operate and maintain the facilities, and
- program costs for such aspects as training, institutional development, community organization, and hygiene improvement.

Capital costs are the initial investment costs provided either in the form of a loan or grant and are much higher in the beginning than over time. Recurrent costs are those costs needed for the ongoing management of the facilities and are paid by individual households through user fees. In addition to operation and maintenance, recurrent costs for sewered systems should include depreciation, debt service, and expansion of facilities. Program costs include such activities as training, promotion, and technical assistance. These costs are generally ongoing, but are higher in the early stages of a project when the facilities are constructed.

These three categories of costs can be allocated to various parties or stakeholders. The sources of funds typically include national government funds, local government funds, external donors, and users. The national budget process is an important factor in determining how these costs are allocated.

The level of service, capital costs, and financial policies on recurrent costs are inextricably linked. Sanitation facilities that have high capital costs will also have higher recurrent costs. Levels of service must take into account not only the availability of funds (from household, government, and other sources) for capital costs, but also the ability to recover recurrent costs over the long term. While generally preferred by users, sewered facilities will have vastly higher recurrent costs than non-sewered facilities. Household willingness-to-pay for improved sanitation is a critical factor.

General Questions

1. *In planning for service provision, do sanitation programs receive the same priority considerations as other basic services, such as water, electricity, and solid waste collection? If not, what could be the causative factors? What contributes to financial considerations for sanitation?*
2. *Do the policies indicate the general costs of meeting all sanitation needs? Are resources available to carry out these policies?*

The magnitude of the overall national need for sanitation is an essential first step in formulating relevant policies. Meeting these needs may be expressed in monetary terms, such as total capital investments plus annual recurrent costs, or in

resource terms, such as required increases in annual budgets or personnel requirements.

3. *Are unit costs of selected sanitation services available?*

The costs of sanitation services proposed to meet the needs of the targeted population groups will differ according to service levels, technologies, and extent of systems selected. Unit costs of services are essential to determining the size of sanitation programs and the rate at which they can meet the needs of the various population groups. Unit costs may be expressed in terms of per capita expenditures or as basic component costs of sanitation systems (latrines, flush toilets, sewer pipes, and treatment plants).

Capital Costs

4. *What are the sources of capital costs (household, public, private, external) and how and under what terms are they allocated among levels of government?*

5. *What steps are being taken to increase capital funds for sanitation?*

6. *Do individual households have access to capital, for example, through micro-credit programs?*

7. *Are there subsidies for capital costs from the national government? Are they targeted and allocated in a transparent manner? Is the annual budget allocation sufficient to make any impact? Are they allocated to local governments?*

8. *Where households are expected to pay all or a substantial portion of capital and/or running costs, are these amounts realistic in relation to average rural and urban incomes of the target groups?*

9. *Where the poor are living on land that is technically difficult to build on (steep slopes, flood plains, rocky soils, etc.), have the additional costs of accessing sanitation services been adequately and equitably addressed?*

Recurrent Costs

10. *Are recurrent costs identified, particularly those borne by households?*

The long-term sustainability of sanitation systems will depend greatly upon the support given by the users to the maintenance, repair, and general upkeep of their facilities. Experience shows that the more clearly the recurrent costs of sanitation services are recognized, accepted, and supported by the users, the greater are the prospects for sustainability.

11. *Does local government receive financial allocations from national government to subsidize the recurrent costs for sanitation, especially for municipal systems?*

Are these amounts adequate to cover existing systems? If not adequate, are there plans in place to increase user payments?

Programmatic Costs

12. Are the programmatic costs of implementing the policies identified (e.g., training, capacity building, hygiene education, institutional development, technical assistance)?

13. What are the sources of funding for programmatic costs? Are they adequate?

3.9. Institutional Roles and Responsibilities

To be effective, sanitation policies and associated program development and implementation must be under the responsibility of one or more institutions. In most countries, responsibility for sanitation is divided among a number of ministries, based on their involvement in urban affairs, housing and public services, rural development, environmental protection, and local government administration. This can lead to a confusing mix of institutional activities, sometimes resulting in overlapping authorities or in a situation where no organization seems to have clearly defined responsibilities, thereby resulting in gaps in sanitation coverage, or even conflicting directives.

To avoid such problems, the sanitation needs of all population target groups should be under the clear responsibility of specified institutions. The roles of each institution should be defined, and there should be a designated office as a focal point for the institution. Experience also shows that strong leadership, either political or technical, within the institution is essential for effective policy implementation. Other key aspects of institutional responsibility include the availability of resources, sound management, and clearly defined sanitation programs.

1. Which agencies are currently responsible for the institutional roles listed in the matrix below?

The matrix outlined in Table 13 is intended for those institutions with primary responsibility for these functions and may not include all possible stakeholders. Of course, there may be more than one institution with responsibility for a given function. The institutions that are typically stakeholders in sanitation include national ministries or agencies, public utilities, various levels of subnational and local government, NGOs, community-based organizations, and the private sector.

Table 13. Institutional Matrix

Roles	Rural	Urban Poor	Municipal / Small Towns
Planning			
Financing			
Regulation			
Implementation			
Operations and Maintenance			
Monitoring and Evaluation			
Program Support - training - hygiene promotion - institutional development - community organization			

2. *Where are the gaps in carrying out these functions?*

3. *How effective are these institutions in carrying out these roles?*

Any institution that has responsibilities for meeting sanitation needs but does not have the capacity to do so represents a gap in implementing policies. The constraints causing these gaps—for example, poor legislative framework, lack of budgetary and financial resources, inadequate human resources, or weak leadership—should be identified.

4. *What is needed to strengthen any major weaknesses in institutional capacity?*

Where possible, actions appropriate to correcting weaknesses in institutional capacity should be identified. Some actions may be internal to the institution, such as improved management or changes in technologies, while others may require inter-ministerial approval, such as personnel incentives or institutional reorganization.

5. *Is there an adequate supply of human resources to carry out sanitation programs? What are the main gaps? Is there a plan to build capacity to fill in the gaps?*

6. *Has a lead sanitation agency been identified? Does this agency exercise its leadership effectively?*

A lead agency is necessary to coordinate overall sanitation activities and to ensure that gaps in developing and implementing sanitation services do not occur. The

lead sanitation agency could be a ministry dealing with planning, finance, or infrastructure, or it could be a line agency, such as a national department of sanitation or a national public utility.

7. *Is there effective interagency coordination among the national institutions responsible for sanitation?*
8. *What is the timeframe for implementation of overall sanitation policies?*

A timeframe, such as a two-year program, a five-year plan, or a ten-year horizon, helps to convert a policy from a statement of good intentions to an operational process. Without some indication of the length of time needed to reach a goal, a national sanitation policy is likely to lack the dynamic of urgency.

3.10. Summary/Closing Question

Effective national sanitation policies require an appropriate balance between *hardware* and *software*. *Hardware* is defined as technical and financial support for the provision of sanitation facilities, both household and public systems. *Software* refers to the programmatic support needed to increase political will, strengthen institutional capability, ensure the financing of recurrent costs, and carry out hygiene improvement behavior-change activities. This programmatic support is a critical component in the implementation and management of sanitation programs.

1. *In the policy dialogue surrounding national sanitation policies, what is the balance between these hardware and software dimensions?*
2. *Is there a clear recognition of both dimensions? Is one dimension emphasized more than the other in defining policy and in implementing strategies?*

4

Assessment Methodology: Guidelines to Assess National Sanitation Policies

4.1. Purpose

This chapter provides a methodology for implementing the guidelines needed to assess national sanitation policies. Sample approaches for organizing and conducting the assessment are presented. With each approach in mind, the chapter reviews how the basic questions in the key elements are handled in a country application and identifies the likely phases of the field assessment. The chapter concludes with illustrative terms of reference and a sample report outline.

4.2. Process Advice for Carrying Out the Assessment

Countries inevitably will be at different levels of policy development, and the timing and approach to the assessment of policies will need to be carefully considered. An important point to emphasize is that this tool for assessing national sanitation policies is designed to be a starting point for engaging in a policy formulation or reform process on sanitation. A stand-alone assessment without good promise of follow-on activities is of limited value.

The tool will be optimally applied in countries where the policy environment for water and sanitation issues has a good chance of increasing in significance. For example, this may be in:

- dynamic countries where the enabling environment is good and changes are occurring; or
- countries where the policy process got off to a good start, but has stalled in the program development and implementation phases; or
- stagnant countries where the enabling environment might be invigorated through better information and dialogue stimulated through the assessment process.

Sound judgment is required. The assessment tool will be best applied in countries where there is an opportunity to stimulate change and in locations where actors illustrate demand for analytical support and information and demonstrate some drive for promoting sanitation issues.

The presence of political will, and potentially of resources, for follow-on activities will be an important criterion for application of this assessment tool. Actively interested if not fully engaged government institutions, donor organizations, and civil society organizations will be key features of locations showing demand for the analytical assessment product. The location will need to be one that has strong partner organizations and where solid focal points exist within key institutions.

4.3. Core Issues to Review

The assessment of national sanitation policies is intended to focus on the needs of the underserved populations, defined to include the urban poor in large cities and residents in small towns and rural communities.

National sanitation policies are a mechanism for articulating needs, promoting the importance of sanitation, and defining priorities that lead to programmatic action. The objective of the assessment is to evaluate the adequacy of sanitation policies for improving sanitation services.

At a broad level, the assessment is looking at the adequacy of national sanitation policies and seeks to address several core questions:

1. What are the national sanitation policies?
2. How adequate are these policies?
3. How are these policies translated into programs?
4. How effective are these programs in improving services?

Answers to these broad questions will be addressed by the application of the key elements, which outline specific ingredients of adequate policies and pose a series of questions in order to “tease out” prevailing policy and program conditions. Following application of the key elements, the reporting stage will synthesize observations based on these elements, allowing an assessment team to answer the core questions listed above.

This process will yield an assessment not only of the adequacy of the policies but also of the effectiveness of translating into action the policy-based intentions to improve sanitation services. Information derived from this diagnostic will help illustrate the strengths and weaknesses in the current policy setting. Strategic use of the information derived from this assessment will facilitate identification of opportunities to encourage policy design and program implementation innovation.

4.4. Application of the Key Elements

The key elements provide information and guidance for examining national sanitation policies and their adequacy. They present a range of issues recognized as important

components of good sanitation policies. Given the multifaceted nature of sanitation issues, application of the elements during an assessment of policies requires a careful review of numerous factors, sectors, and stakeholders.

Moreover, managing the application of the key elements requires planning. Not all key elements will need to be reviewed with every contact, nor would this be practical. Given the range of the key elements and the questions within each element, a recommended approach would be to divide responsibilities for addressing the key elements among the team. Several techniques for approaching their use and for defining a division of labor are worthy of consideration. Two suggested approaches follow:

- *Mapping the key elements against key stakeholders.* In preparation, the assessment team is advised to deliberately chart the key elements against organizational contacts for interviews and meetings. Not all people will be able to speak to all the elements. A simple matrix of elements matched with actors will help develop a strategy for understanding the operating environment and sanitation policies and regulations. The act of linking elements with stakeholders will encourage recognition of varying points of view and provide valuable input to the practical ordering and scheduling of key informant interviews.
- *Clustering key elements to assign roles among team members.* The key elements might also be assigned to members of the assessment team. For example, one team member with a health background and/or experience might focus on the health element, while another will focus on the environmental element. Alternatively, another approach would be organizing the team around urban, small town, and rural issues. Team members within these categories would then seek to address *all* the elements as they apply to their areas of focus.

4.5. Organizational Options for Conducting the Assessment

A range of organizational options is possible for the composition of the assessment team, including the following:

- A technically qualified external facilitator (donor agency and/or consultant) with representatives of the government completing the assessment over a longer period of time, perhaps six to nine months.
- An NGO, firm, or organization with an in-country operation completing the assessment using locally sourced personnel, probably within a compressed period of time.
- A two- or three-person team composed of some combination of external and domestic consultants that carries out the assessment within a relatively

compressed time period (three or four weeks). Ideally, a local team of stakeholders will also be paired with the consultants throughout the process.

- Representatives of the government tasked to complete an assessment through a task force, working group, or committee over a six- to nine-month period.

Determining which model to apply in order to complete the assessment depends on such factors as the availability of expertise for the policy analysis, financial resources, and time, including the desired duration or pace for completing the assessment. No single model is the best or the preferred option, and there are strengths and weaknesses for using a consultant team or an in-country task force, committee, or other model. What is most important is that the process be one designed to be technically sound and consultative and that it serve to create momentum for further action.

It is also important that the team's roles and responsibilities be clearly identified. The key elements represent a comprehensive list of ingredients to review. It is important to map out the elements against key actors and informants and make certain the team's roles and areas of focus are well defined among analysts involved in the assessment.

4.6. Steps in the Assessment

The assessment of national sanitation policies may be defined in three essential steps, which are applicable to a consultant team, consultative, or task force model.

1. Basic Data Collection.

- Collect and review background documents and data on water and sanitation.
- Review existing laws, regulations, and policy frameworks on sanitation and directly related issues.
- Assemble basic statistics on sanitation needs and coverage.

These data will define the current setting and help to highlight trends. Chapter 2, "Background Information," outlines in more detail the type of information that is to be pursued in connection with the policies assessment.

2. Meetings with Key Stakeholders.

- Identify key stakeholders and schedule and complete interviews with senior and mid-level officials knowledgeable about the policy process and about water and sanitation issues.
- Target meetings with key government agencies, NGOs, and donor organizations. Issues of policy and regulation, institutional environment, and

programmatic budgets and actions will need to be explored in these meetings and consultations with key stakeholders. A combination of individual interviews and group meetings will be useful to gather input and cross-reference information.

A combination of quantitative and qualitative data will be obtained during this step of the assessment process. Scheduling time to share observations with stakeholders to encourage feedback is important, and it will become a technique in transitioning from the collection of findings to defining conclusions and recommendations. The feedback process (e.g., workshop or meeting) helps to validate information and to generate a clear picture of apparently unconnected sources of information.

2. *Conclusions and Reporting.*

- Prepare a concise report that assembles and synthesizes the findings of the data collection and interview processes.

The document will highlight sanitation policies and regulations and their adequacy when evaluated using the “key elements.” The reporting step in the assessment process will call for the following:

- Summary of the basic data described in Chapter 2.
- Systematic review of each key element and associated findings. An analysis of the collection of interviews and observations gathered, identifying the most salient points for each element.
- Presentation of conclusions and recommendations for improving the content of national sanitation policies and the process for moving forward.
- References to the laws or regulations, key documents, and list of contacts.

The length of the written output may vary considerably depending on the country being assessed. Thoroughness, conciseness and clarity are more important than length. A document of 40 to 50 pages including appendices may often be a reasonable expectation. Because it is unrealistic to expect all decision-makers to read the full report, a good executive summary is very important to ensure that many people are able to access the key points.

A presentation and reporting of findings to key stakeholders is an important step. This reporting and de-briefing provides a venue for sharing information with key contributors and interested groups.

4.7. Field Planning

The following offers a basic checklist to review in preparing for the assessment.

Preplanning

- Confirm there is good demand for the analytical product from the assessment of national sanitation policies.
- Obtain country support for the assessment with key stakeholders.
- Identify the assessment team or task force members.
- Organize a planning meeting for the assessment team or task force to review the purpose of the assessment, discuss its methodology, clarify roles and responsibilities, develop a timeline, and agree on the nature of the final product.
- Identify key stakeholders and outline a deliberate process for involving them and ensuring a balance of perspectives is incorporated in the diagnostic work

Before the interviews begin

- Collect basic data on the country and sanitation sector.
- Identify and obtain relevant policy documents.
- Map interviews with the key elements and ensure that a clear data collection plan is in place.
- Schedule meetings with key government ministries and organizations, donor agencies, and NGOs.
- Plan a feedback meeting for key stakeholders. This meeting can be mentioned at the time of the interview, so people are clear about the process to follow.

Conducting the interviews

- Conduct a brief orientation session for the team and the key organization(s) to explain the purpose of the assessment and the approach to be used.
- Review the available information (basic data, policy documents) prior to conducting interviews.
- Conduct the interviews as scheduled. Emphasize interviews with key organizations. Schedule return meetings if needed.
- Plan a field visit to a rural and a poor urban area to make observations and field interviews.
- Hold meeting(s) with the sponsoring organization and representatives of the key stakeholders to present provisional findings and recommendations.

Following completion of the data collection interviews

- Prepare a draft report.
- Send the draft report to key organizations and sponsors.
- Revise the report as needed to make the document as useful as possible for the government and donors and civil society organizations.

4.8. Personnel and Level of Effort

A professional team knowledgeable about water and sanitation issues will carry out the assessment of national sanitation policies. Relevant training and professional experience will range across one or more of the areas of environmental management, public or environmental health, and water and sanitation. Whether operating as a consultant team, a task force, or other facilitated model, the team members will require technical credentials, appreciation for policy, and a clear mandate for action. The team and its support structures will be responsible for setting up appointments, reviewing data, completing interviews with key contacts, and compiling a policy assessment report.

Whichever organizational approach is chosen for the assessment, there are likely to be strengths and weaknesses in it. A successful assessment requires well-trained analysts with a knowledge and understanding of the country, facilities for ensuring access to data and key contacts, open and creative approaches to work completion, and a commitment to a process that promotes involvement and to sanitation policies and programs. An understanding of sanitation issues and how they impact both men and women will be an important attribute to have represented on the team. An orientation to capacity building is also essential, either during the assessment process itself or as a focus for the follow-on policy and program development initiatives that might flow from the assessment. A sample terms of reference can be found below in the box entitled “Sample Terms of Reference.”

The schedule for completion of the assessment will vary considerably based on the organizational options pursued in developing the composition of the team. A tightly focused and scheduled consultant team might begin and finish the assessment within a four-week period. Assessments using other models of team composition might

Sample Terms of Reference

This Terms of Reference is to guide an assessment of national sanitation policies in one selected country. The assessment will be completed following the “key elements” and methodological tips for assessing the adequacy of national sanitation policies as outlined in this document.

Essential Tasks

1. Collect and review background documents on water and sanitation policy, with a focus on national and state-level policy frameworks. Review existing laws, regulations, and policy frameworks on sanitation and directly related issues.
2. Schedule and complete interviews with senior and mid-level officials knowledgeable about the policy process and about water and sanitation issues. Target meetings with key government agencies, NGOs, and donor organizations. Systematically map meetings to ensure gathering information across each of the key elements.
3. Following an approach that brings together the diversity of perspectives of key actors and assessment team members, formulate findings and recommendations with a strong Executive Summary.
4. Prepare a concise report synthesizing sector data, pulling together the assessment of the key elements and presenting conclusions and recommendations.
5. Disseminate findings through debriefing(s) with key stakeholders and sponsoring agencies.

Key Qualifications of Assessment Team Members

- In-depth knowledge of the policy process in the focus country
- Broad knowledge of the water and sanitation sector
- Minimum 8 to 10 years’ substantive experience in public policy analysis related to health, sanitation, and/or environmental issues at national or subnational levels
- Excellent interview skills and ability to deal effectively with mid-level technicians and senior government officials and civic leaders
- Strong presentation skills and report writing ability
- Advanced degree in one or more of the following areas: public policy analysis, public health, water and sanitation, or environmental policy issues

require anywhere from 1 to 12 months to complete. One calendar month is viewed as the minimum time period, and an upper limit of one year as the maximum.

4.9. Illustrative Level of Effort

Following the range of organizational options defined in Section 4.5, an illustrative level of effort is defined for each model of assessment team composition.⁷

(1) If the assessment were carried out through a facilitated process over a number of months, the level of effort may be intermittent over a number of months. A facilitated process or task force model might require up to 80 to 100 days of time, consisting of multiple inputs by a consultant over a six- to nine-month period.

Data collection & interview preparation	10 days
Meetings, workshops, interviews & other consultations	60 days
Analysis & report writing	10 days
Total	80–100 days

(2) If the assessment were carried out through an NGO, firm or organization with an in-country operation, completing the assessment probably will use locally sourced personnel. The work might be completed within a compressed period of time with a level of effort as follows:

Data collection & interview preparation	5 days
Meetings & interviews	12–15 days
Analysis & report writing	5–7 days
Total	22–27 days per person or 60–75 days for a three- person team

(3) If the assessment were carried out by a consultant team within a relatively short period of time, the level of effort by a single team member might be as follows:

⁷ There are many ways of configuring time and labor requirements, and these options are examples but the approaches and their estimates will need to be refined on a case-by-case basis.

Data collection & interview preparation	5 days
Meetings & interviews	12–15 days
Analysis & report writing	5–7 days
Total	22–27 days per person or 60–75 days for a three- person team

(4) Representatives of the government tasked to complete an assessment through a task force, working group, or committee over a six- to nine-month period of time. It is hard to specify the total level of effort for this model, but it may be similar to options #2 or #3, though the timeline for completion may be quite different.

Data collection & interview preparation	5 days
Meetings & interviews	12–15 days
Analysis & report writing	5–7 days
Total	22–27 days per person or 60–75 days for a three- person team

Cost estimates for the assessment also will vary. Some basic guidelines might include the level of effort as specified above, along with workshop or meeting support costs, travel, and per diem for the core team members (as required).

4.10. Report Outline

A possible report outline is offered in the box entitled “Sample Report Outline” (at right). The length of the document produced as output following the assessment may be targeted to be 40 to 50 pages, including appendices. While aiming to keep the document manageable and readable, the document should be

Sample Report Outline

Executive Summary

1. Introduction
2. Basic Data
3. Summary of Existing Policies
 - Existing policies
 - Policy-making process
4. Findings (organized by key elements)
5. Conclusions
6. Recommendations

substantial in depth and length, as it will reflect the culmination of data and insights across a range of issues and agencies on sanitation policies.

An executive summary designed for senior policymakers will be an important complement to the in-depth analytical assessment and recommendations for the sanitation policy environment.

4.11. Combining Assessment Results, Issues, and Actors

As defined in this document, a process to assess policies ultimately aims to stimulate future development of sanitation policies and better sanitation coverage. Thus, the relationship between substantive issues and process issues is quite important.

The objective of the assessment is to identify the good features of sanitation policies and regulations, and illustrate where the same are not yet adequate. Such analytical work and policy development will help realize the goal of improving sanitation services. A positive assessment process will be one that is highly participatory, employs techniques to take full account of all interests, and encourages engagement from stakeholders. A good process will be one that uses the assessment information to define the scale of the sanitation problems and the nature of the sanitation policies environment. Good practices in the assessment process will mobilize participation across actors, creating a positive environment for policy change and related follow-on activities.

Effective participation in the follow-on policy process will depend on the ability to identify problems and participate in an open process of problem identification, the ability to participate in processes that formulate policy solutions, and the ability to bring policy issues and potential solutions into the government's agenda, or the political salience of the issue.

5

Building on the Assessment

The purpose of this chapter is to provide guidance on how to build on the assessment once it has been conducted and move towards actual policy development. As stated throughout this guideline, the assessment is intended to serve as a starting point for engaging in a policy process to promote and improve sanitation program coverage and services. The value of the assessment will be in analyzing the current sanitation policies, articulating the gaps, and creating some positive momentum for policy design and implementation. What happens after the assessment will determine whether it was a useful activity.

The process for formulating, reviewing, approving, and implementing policies varies tremendously across countries. This chapter briefly reviews a general process for policy development drawing upon the literature on the policy process in developing countries and then uses that framework to provide some specific guidance for moving forward after the assessment.⁸

5.1. Components of a Policy Process

Following the assessment of national sanitation policies, looking at the policy process diagram will facilitate the identification and characterization of a prevailing policy environment. A clear characterization of the policy environment may suggest targets of opportunity for encouraging a policy change. Core components of a policy-making process are presented in Figure 1. The major components of the framework for the policy process are as follows:

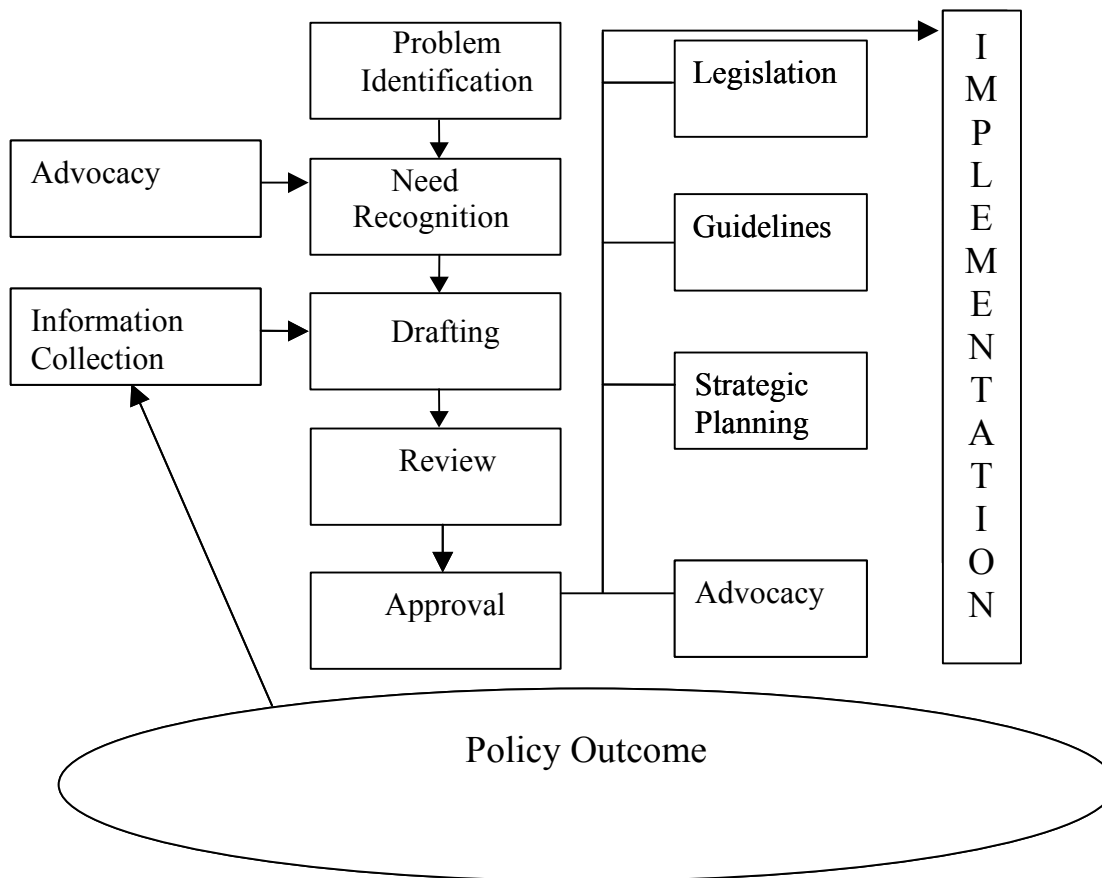
Advocacy for action. The identification of weaknesses in existing policies often flows from key actors and stakeholders bringing attention to issues or conditions that may be addressed through policy alternatives and program initiatives. Often, an event or new finding will rally interested parties to advocate change. For example, a cholera outbreak may stimulate action and bring attention to areas of particularly poor sanitation coverage and therefore encourage national sanitation policy debates and requests for new programming.

Problem identification and need recognition. The need for a policy response to sanitation begins following an understanding of the scale and magnitude of sanitation

⁸ The process of policy formulation is extensively developed in the works of Lasswell (1951) and Meirer (1991). The policy framework for developing national sanitation policies is adapted from Lasswell (1951) "The Policy Orientation" in *Policy Sciences*, edited by D. Lerner and H. Lasswell. Stanford: Stanford University Press, and Meier, G. (1991) "Policy Lessons and Policy Formulation," pp. 3-12 in *Politics and Policy Making in Developing Countries*. San Francisco: International Center for Economic Growth Press. The work of Grindle and Thomas (1991) is also influential.

problems and the recognition that a national-level response is necessary to address the problems. Good data and information are essential at this stage in order to build a case for action, and they will help to give legitimacy and structure to a prevailing problem. The assessment serves to pull together data and observations from key stakeholders in the sector. The assessment of national policies may in itself bring recognition of the magnitude or scale of needs and may spur follow-on work in the policy realm.

Figure 1. Process for Development of National Sanitation Policies



Drafting. Drafting or writing policies for review and comment is usually the task of working groups and committees. Many countries may rapidly prepare legislation with fairly limited participation, while others will rely on a large number of committees or forums to seek input and build consensus around a range of topics. South Africa and its national sanitation policies highlight a good policy example following the drafting of a series of White Papers. Over a number of years in South Africa, draft policies were put forward, debated, and improved upon, until finally a broad constituency was formed around the draft national policies. During the process of finalizing the policy details, strategy formulation and implementation went ahead. This step facilitated practical learning, which was immediately reflected in the final policy.

Review. In some countries, draft policies are debated widely and reviewed by a large number of groups and individuals through comment periods and dissemination events. In other cases, a limited review takes place, though often in these cases policies languish, as there are few champions to review, approve, and implement the policies. Lead agency identification and devoted key actors are important to guide a review process and manage dispute resolution and redrafting.

Approval. National policies are approved at one of three levels: Parliament, the Cabinet, or the ministerial. Policy approval will bring powerful support for moving into programming and will often confirm or suggest some level of resource commitment.

Preparing for and launching into implementation. Policies are implemented in many variations. Some policies are implemented through operational or strategic phases or through committees and task forces to develop operational guidelines. In some cases, elements of the policy can be implemented even before the full policy is adopted. Interest groups and key stakeholders are encouraged to take the lead in disseminating and implementing parts of the policies. Most policies contain components that may be implemented immediately through administrative actions, while other elements will require specific enabling legislation and the obtaining of funds.

Policy implementation is not a mechanical process; rather, it is a daunting undertaking with many points that may impact success. The positive cases of strong national sanitation policies in both South Africa and Uganda help to emphasize the importance of strong decentralized management and illustrate that proof of results rests with implementation.

Progress from the initial stage of the policy process to the last step can be easily stalled and stopped. Progress is not inevitable.

5.2. Building on the Assessment

The assessment findings, together with a sense of the policy process, will help guide strategic thinking about follow-on activities. A thorough assessment will pull together a comprehensive set of information flowing from the structure outlined in the key elements (Chapter 3). This information provides a base from which to understand the overall sanitation political economy in the country, determine key issues, and identify relationships between policy, programs, and process.

For example, an assessment in country X may indicate a range of sanitation issues and the existence of a variety of programs—many of which are successful on a small scale. But the assessment may also find an absence of national sanitation policies and regulations. The identification of sanitation problems and the characterization of key actors to be involved may well suggest an opportunity to focus on mobilizing support for crafting broad national sanitation policies and moving from *problem identification* to *drafting of policies*.

To take another example, an assessment in country Y may reveal policies and regulations on the books that articulate and promote the importance of water and sanitation. Although these policies look good on paper, they may lack champions to carry them forward. Understanding the country dynamics may serve to direct follow-on attention to policy dialogue and dissemination efforts in the *review* stage in order to galvanize support for draft policies and build program leaders and action plans to help the policies move forward on a national scale.

5.3. Checklist of Steps for Moving Forward

This checklist is a generic set of steps for moving forward after the assessment. While these steps will naturally vary among countries, they do represent the lessons learned in implementing policy changes across a wide range of stakeholders. They are offered as a starting point for developing a strategy for taking action after the assessment.

- Create an initial task force or similar body that can guide the development of sanitation policies.

The policy process will not move forward without a group of committed members. The composition and size of this task force will vary, but given the multi-sector nature of sanitation, the group is likely to require membership from several government agencies and civil society organizations. Effective leadership is vital, with authority designated to the lead for the development of sanitation policies. Team members will need to know the process (and their participation) has the support of senior staff in the agency or organization.

- Agree on the policy change agenda.

The first order of business of the task force is to agree on the policy agenda—the issues that will be addressed. This task will be facilitated by the assessment, but it may still require other choices.

- Finalize the composition of the task force.

As the policy agenda is agreed upon, the task force will want to reconfirm membership. Some of the issues on the policy agenda may require the participation of other government or nongovernment stakeholders in order to fully address the policy issue.

- Develop a strategy for addressing the issues.

The task force will focus on developing a strategy for addressing the issues on the policy agenda. The strategy will include the following:

- Sequence of issues to be addressed
- Additional data and analyses required

- Strategy for engaging key stakeholders and the broader public
- Clear assignment of responsibility for follow-through
- A timeline
- Resources to facilitate the process
- Resulting reports or products

Documenting this strategy will help to define the work plan for the task force. Giving particular emphasis to the use of stakeholder workshops is important to galvanize support among key actors.

- Determine the resources needed to implement the agenda.

The task force may determine that additional resources will be needed to carry out the strategy. While policy development is not necessarily a very costly effort, it may entail funding for additional analyses and the development of draft policies.

- Implement the strategy for policy development.

This will include additional analyses, public awareness campaigns, the drafting of actual policies, and the review of the policies.

- Monitor the implementation of the strategy.

The task force will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the strategy for policy development. Regular meetings will serve to review progress, make mid-course corrections, and make decisions.

- Initiate the approval process.

The approval process will vary greatly by country and by the nature of the policies themselves. The critical step is to initiate that process so the policies have the right level of legitimacy to serve as the basis for action.

- Communicate the results to the public and stakeholders.

Once the task force has specific policies to recommend, it will be important to gain wide support from the range of institutional stakeholders, as well as the general public. Policy efforts often fail because the public has not been adequately informed along the way and does not understand the rationale for the policy changes.

5.4. Closing Thoughts

Policy development is inherently a messy process. Rarely does policy change happen according to a well-conceived linear plan. Although this fact does not obviate the need for an intentional process, it does point out the importance of being flexible and able to adapt. Resistance will come in unexpected places, especially in a process that is inclusive and participatory. The importance of effective leadership in this process is vital in order to deal with the inevitable issues and decision points that arise in any policy development process.

Given the importance of sanitation to health and the environment, this is an area of policy reform well worth undertaking. The assessment is only a starting point. Its success will be judged by its effectiveness in being a catalyst for policy change leading to the development and implementation of sanitation policies. Success will not be judged in the short term but over time, not only in terms of actual policies but also in terms of actual improvement in sanitation and hygiene services.

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