

Activity sheet 1:

Using the Social Model to identify individual and environmental barriers

Purpose: Participants to apply their understanding of the social model of disability by using it to analyse a set of problems in using latrines.

Diversity message: Disadvantaged users at first glance have very different needs and problems; but by using a social model of analysis, common solutions can be identified to benefit all.

Engineering message: A social model problem analysis can assist planners and technicians to identify problems to which solutions can be provided.

Materials: Handout + pen; paper, flip-chart paper if doing it as a group

Time needed: 30 mins – 1 hour



Introduction

Before carrying out this activity, please watch Section 1 of the powerpoint presentation 'Social model of exclusion' (1).

Activity

Look at Table 1 on p.3 **Types of problems faced by different users when using squat latrines**. The table lists six groups of latrine users and the problems each of the groups experiences when using latrines.

(The information in the table has been adapted from a study carried out by NEWAH in Nepal (2)).

1. Consider each of the problems in turn, and identify whether it is related to the capabilities/weaknesses/condition of **individuals**, or whether it is related to the **environment** – i.e. features or condition of the physical environment or infrastructure.
2. Using the framework provided in Table 2, allocate the problems from Table 1 to the relevant column in Table 2 – problem of the individual or of the physical environment.

3. Start with the easiest problems – those that clearly fit in one column or the other. e.g. 'pain in knees' is clearly an individual problem.
4. The wording of some problems is a little vague, so you may use your experience and imagination to add clarification. E.g. 'Danger of falling in the pit'. Danger caused by ? This may help you decide which column to put it in.

Some problems, at first glance, may appear to be the problem of the individual. This is because of the way they are worded. See if you can re-word some of the sentences so that the emphasis is on the problem in the environment rather than the problem of the individual.

Hint

Some problems may appear twice, first in the individual column, and then, with different wording and emphasis, in the environment column.

Discussion points

1. What are the main differences between the two tables?
2. Which table provides clearer information for latrine designers?
3. Are there any problems that are similar for all categories of users?
4. As a latrine designer, which problem would you solve first to achieve the greatest benefit?

References:

1. *Equity and inclusion in Water, sanitation and hygiene: Using the social model of exclusion to make WASH inclusive.* Jones, H., Gosling, L., Jansz, S. and Flynn, E. (2012)
Powerpoint presentation. WEDC/WaterAid.
2. NEWAH (2004) *Making Latrines User-Friendly for Everyone. An exploratory research study on the discomfort faced by pregnant women, elderly, overweight, sick and disabled people when using squat latrines.* Nepal Water for Health, Western Region Office: Pokhara, Nepal. <http://www.washdoc.info/docsearch/title/168466>

Further information

For more Equity and Inclusion learning materials, go to
<http://www.inclusivewash.org.au/>
or
<http://WEDC-Knowledge.Lboro.ac.uk/collections/equity-inclusion>

For further advice or support, please contact:
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Table 1: Types of problems faced by different users when using squat latrines

Users	Types of problems experienced
Elderly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Danger of falling into the pit. • Pain in knees, back and stomach. • Legs and hands get numb if squatting for long time. • In direct pit latrine foul smell, flies, insects cause irritation. • Problem getting to latrine at night problem due to long distance and no light. • Footrest is not level so become unbalanced while squatting & feel they will fall back. • Difficult to lift heavy cement toilet hole cover every time. • Temporary sidewall is in danger of being blown away by wind.
Disabled ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to crouch down and squat for long periods of time without support.
Sick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to balance while squatting and getting up. • Knees, waist, back start aching after few minutes of using latrine. • Foot rest is not level so there is a danger of slipping and falling on back. • In direct pit latrine there is irritation due to foul smell, flies etc.
Overweight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncomfortable to crouch down due to large stomach. • Foot rest is not level so become unbalanced while squatting. • Ankles start paining, legs get numb, and body gets tired if squatting for long time. • Difficult to breathe while squatting. • In direct pit latrine, irritation due to foul smell, flies etc.
Pregnant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stomach gets pressed hard while crouching down. • Cannot use for long time due to pain in nerves, stomach, and uterus. • Legs and hands get numb quickly; legs start cramping. • Feels something inside the body will come out instead of urine. • Footrest is not level so become unbalanced while squatting. • Scared to depend on footrest completely due to temporary bamboo/ wood construction. • Legs get swollen after using toilet perhaps due to cold. • Difficult to breathe while squatting.
Women (who fall into none of the above categories)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem of security due to lack of permanent sidewalls. • The space inside the latrine is very small. • Footrest uncomfortable, temporary, and not level, so danger of slipping and falling on back. • Legs get tired soon. • Danger of falling inside the pit. • In direct pit latrine irritation due to foul smell, flies etc.

¹ Only one disabled user was involved in the study, hence only one problem identified.

Table 2: Differentiating the Problems

Types of users	Individual problem using the latrine	Physical/environmental barrier to using the latrine
<i>Elderly</i>		
<i>Disabled</i>		
<i>Sick</i>		
<i>Overweight</i>		
<i>Pregnant</i>		
<i>Women (in none of the above categories)</i>		