

Section 3a

Preparing Local Action Plans

Who should read this

- Senior local officials at town/city level, including: programme directors; programme component managers who are responsible for developing and implementing action plans for improving services for the poor in towns and cities.
- Senior technical support staff on attachment to the programme including NGOs and local/international consultants.
- Managers of other concerned line departments and their staff.

Objectives of this section

To propose a framework and supporting tools for local action planning which responds to the demands and priorities of service users in urban poor areas. This should be read in conjunction with Section 3b on network service planning and Section 3c on Consensus Building.

What this section tells you

A **framework for local action planning** is presented which comprises the following stages.

- Team building
- Establish contact
- Preparing users for action planning
- Find out what is already there
- Assess users priorities and demand
- Identify need for promotion activities
- Explore technical options
- Discuss operation & maintenance requirements
- Estimate indicative costs
- Review costs

- Reassess user priorities and demand
- Modify technical details
- Engineering design
- Cost recovery
- Implementation procedures
- Draw up Local Action Plan

Gender and **User groups** are two important cross cutting issues which need to be considered in each of the steps of the framework.

It is important to develop a simple, consistent **reporting format**.

The **fieldwork teams** have primary responsibility for preparing the plan and to make sure that the contents are agreed with the users.

The following **supporting tools** are provided

- Preparing users and community groups for action planning
- Participatory information gathering
- The role of NGOs
- Initial survey and groundwork
- User perceptions of existing services
- Technical options and levels of service
- User demand for service improvements
- Gender issues
- Formation of user groups
- Cost recovery

The need for local action planning

The purpose of the Local Action Plan is to find out what individual households, user groups and other community groups want individually and collectively, and what resources they themselves are willing to commit. The plan needs to reflect the priorities of residents for improved service delivery; not everyone has to have the same thing and we should avoid applying standard solutions to everybody.

Traditional approaches to planning which have been ‘top down’ have rarely if ever worked in relation to improving the situation of the urban poor because they ignore the concerns, priorities and activities of local people. The most

important point is that the Local Action Plans need to be developed in a participatory way, which involves meeting regularly with groups of residents, finding out about their priorities and developing the plan with them so that it reflects what they actually want.

This approach may be very different from the routine way in which municipal officials are used to working, and it is very important that preparatory orientation and staff training is provided well before the action planning programme is due to start.

Framework for local action planning

Table 3a.1. presents the framework for local action planning as a series of steps to be followed; it gives a brief description of each component and refers to the various tools which describe the components in more detail, and provide help with what you actually need to do. The key point here is that all of the stages are developed in a participatory way, that is, through joint discussions, meetings and interviews which involve the programme team and the service users.

Note that we are not always talking about building new infrastructure; **improving operation and maintenance is the best way to improve services**. It is incorrect to jump to the conclusion that because something is not functioning properly there is automatically a need to build something new. It is therefore essential to have people with sound technical knowledge as part of all service planning activities.

SERVICES FOR THE URBAN POOR

Table 3a.1. Framework for local action planning		
Activity	Brief description	Further guidance
Team building	<p>Set up a system for managing the fieldwork. Field staff are crucial members of the programme who will be dealing directly with service users. Consider creating inter-disciplinary teams comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ engineering ■ community/social development ■ health ■ other sector specialists as required <p>Define roles and responsibilities, reporting lines and arrange training in participatory methods and how Local Action Plans will be developed.</p>	Tool 2 Participatory information gathering
Establish contact	<p>Fieldwork teams make contact with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ residents in the target areas; and ■ municipal Councillors. <p>The first stage of establishing contact with urban poor communities is critically important and has to be handled very carefully. The approach at this stage will set the tone for future meetings and discussions. The purpose is to introduce the ideas behind the programme for improving services. Please remember:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ talk with people and not ‘at’ them; ■ listen and treat peoples’ views as important; ■ be very clear about what the programme is offering and what it is not offering. 	Tool 1 Preparing users and community groups for action planning
Preparing users for action planning	<p>Fieldwork teams begin work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ gain the confidence of local people ■ explore existing attitudes to planning ■ convince people of the need for planning ■ explain how the proposed planning process will work and how long everything may take 	<p>Tool 1 Preparing users and community groups for action planning</p> <p>Tool 2 Participatory information gathering</p> <p>Tool 3 The role of NGOs</p>

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Table 3a.1. continued

Activity	Brief description	Further guidance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ explore the existence of local user groups, other CBOs and active NGOs ■ begin to identify possible roles for local NGOs ■ identify where there is a need to establish new user groups 	
Find out what is already there	<p>Initial survey work to find out about what services exist and what are the users perceptions of the services. There are two approaches, both of which need to be used as they provide different information about the same problem.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ use participatory methods to find out what the opinions of the users are concerning the provision and operation of existing services. This also gives useful indications of demand. ■ also use a technical survey to establish what infrastructure exists, its condition, and where it is located. 	<p>Tools 4 Initial survey and groundwork</p> <p>Tool 5 Users perceptions of existing services</p>
Assess users priorities and demand	<p>Use participatory techniques to make an initial assessment of user priorities for improved services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ establish what services people want; ■ explore the desire for different levels of service in each sector. <p>Beware of simply asking people what they want without putting any limits on it; otherwise, the natural response is to want everything. The assessment needs to revolve around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ what do you want? ■ how much of the available development budget are you willing to allocate to this? ■ how much additional contribution are you prepared to make to get what you want? 	<p>Tool 7 User demand for service improvements</p> <p>also Tool 8 Gender issues</p> <p>Tool 9 Formation of user groups</p>

SERVICES FOR THE URBAN POOR

Table 3a.1. continued

Activity	Brief description	Further guidance
Identify need for promotion activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Depending upon the priorities expressed by users, there may be some important overall goals which the programme wishes to achieve which do not emerge: for example, greater coverage of latrines for improved sanitation. ■ In this case it is appropriate to plan for a sanitation promotion programme. 	Tool 7 User demand for service improvements
Explore technical options and costs	<p>If we are to respond to what people want and are willing to contribute their resources to, we need to be able to offer a range of technical options</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ identify the range of options for providing those services which are a priority ■ narrow down the options to those which are feasible within the local situation; when the specific local site conditions are taken into account, many options do not turn out to be feasible, and this makes the choices more straightforward ■ calculate the indicative costs for the improvements in each sector which the users have prioritised. The use of simple tools such as standard engineering details and spreadsheets makes this relatively simple to do. 	Tools 6 Technical options and levels of service
Discuss operation & maintenance requirements	<p>The key issue is that O&M is an essential consideration from the very beginning of the planning process not something which comes in at the end. Users are concerned about how well their services work; this depends on effective O&M of the installed facilities.</p>	<p>See Section 6 on O&M</p> <p>also Tool 6 Technical options and levels of service Tool 9 Formation of user groups</p>

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Table 3a.1. continued

Activity	Brief description	Further guidance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ new facilities bring with them new requirements for O&M; this is an integral part of deciding which technical option is most suitable. ■ there are different models for the management of O&M, involving the municipality, user groups and individual households to different extents. ■ negotiating roles and responsibilities for O&M is a central part of the consensus building component of action planning. 	
Review costs	Discuss the cost estimates with the users in relation to the budget ceiling for the area and willingness to pay for particular levels of service. Users will be contributing to the operation and maintenance costs, and in some cases to the capital costs.	Tool 7 User demand for service improvements Tool 10 Cost recovery
Reassess user priorities and demand	Reviewing the costs may result in changes in demand and user priorities. Assist users to revise their priorities within the overall budget ceiling including any top-up money users/user groups are prepared to add. This now provides the basis for the Local Action Plan.	Tool 7 User demand for service improvements also Tool 8 Gender issues Tool 9 Formation of user groups
Modify technical details	The review of priorities and demand may lead to a desire to modify specific technical details; whilst these can appear to be minor, they may be very important for users: for example, bathing enclosures to suit the specific needs of women.	See Section 5 on Implementation
Engineering design	Detailed engineering design work then needs to be carried out to determine the required capacity and hence the size of water pipes, surface drains, sewers and power	See Section 3b Tool 13 Assessing system capacity

Table 3a.1. continued		
Activity	Brief description	Further guidance
	lines. This also needs to specify the how and where this local infrastructure links into the secondary city infrastructure lines.	
Cost recovery	Explore mechanisms for collecting money for both formal payments to municipalities and utilities, and local systems managed by user groups.	Tool 10 Cost recovery
Implementation procedures	Discuss the options for implementing the improvements; in particular, whether there are community based organisations which are interested in undertaking simple works themselves through community contracting.	See Section 5 on Implementation
Draw up Local Action Plan	The Local Action Plan can now be drawn up. It then goes forward to the consensus building process for negotiation and agreement in relation to the Area Service Plan.	See Section 3c on Consensus Building

Cross cutting issues

There are two important issues which need to be considered in each of the steps of the framework in Table 3a.1; these are the ‘cross-cutting’ issues of gender and user groups.

Gender Issues: women are largely responsible for accessing services such as water for their families. Improvements to services therefore have a particular impact on the time, effort and money which women spend on these activities. Local Action Plans must reflect the fact that:

- women have these responsibilities; and
- women usually know more about the problems of accessing services than men.

Focusing on the priorities of women and children is necessary if the health and social benefits of service improvements are to be realised. For further guidance see:

- Tool 8 Gender issues
- Tool 2 Participatory information gathering

- Tool 3 The role of NGOs

User Groups: Some services are likely to be provided on a communal rather than an individual basis, for example standposts and handpumps for water supply. Maintenance problems are lessened if there are clearly defined groups of users for any service which is not provided to individual households. For further guidance see:

- Tool 9 Formation of user groups

Preparing the Local Action Plan

The important point here is that the Local Action Plan as described in the Framework (Table 3a.1) is something which develops from a set of initial proposals, followed by discussions and revisions of these proposals. There is always an important element of negotiation, ‘going round and round’ to arrive at an eventual solution which is the best compromise between the possible options and the available resources.

The final stage is to present all of the ideas which have been developed; this is an essential record of who has agreed to do what. It is very important to realise that the ideas contained in the plan may need to be expressed in different ways for the different stakeholder groups.

- People from urban poor communities may not be familiar with formally written-up plans, calculations and drawings; verbal communication and verbal agreements/contracts are commonplace. It is important to have a record of what has been agreed; this can be contained on a site plan which has been developed using participatory techniques. Nevertheless, some users are quite comfortable with more formally presented plans.
- Secondary stakeholders including donor/lending agencies require plans to be drawn up and submitted using formats which are specific to the agency; try to find out what formats and procedures are required and use these. Sometimes this can create problems for local Programme Managers, because external agencies do not always make it clear what they require.

It is important to develop a simple, consistent reporting format. The fieldwork teams have primary responsibility for preparing the plan in the agreed format and to make sure that the contents are signed off by representatives of the users, possibly through CBOs and/or NGOs.

Table 3a.2. suggests what information the Local Action Plan should contain.

Table 3a.2. Typical contents of the Local Action Plan

Section	Contents
1. Existing situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ location of existing services marked on a site plan ■ summary of users perceptions of the adequacy of existing services
2. User priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ summary of the agreed priorities
3. Proposal for improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ list proposed service improvements by sector (see Table 3a.3 below) ■ identify specific user groups with 'communal' facilities such as water points, shared latrines and solid waste bins ■ mark up the site plan with location of new facilities and service lines ■ cross reference each service improvement to Standard Engineering Details (see Section 5 From Action Plans to Implementation); specify any modifications to these standard details
4. Design Calculations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ detailed engineering designs and specifications for water pipelines, surface drains, sewers, power lines. Use standard details wherever possible. This section can be placed in an Appendix. ■ relevant details such as pipe size can be included on the site plan
5. Cost estimates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ prepare a table of indicative cost estimates for the improvements by sector
6. Proposal for financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ set out how the improvements will be financed ■ list the financial commitments and contributions to be made by agencies and users against the different facilities
7. Operation and Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ list O&M tasks by sector for each of the improvements ■ define roles and responsibilities for tasks with a list of commitments made by agencies and users
8. Cost recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ define the mechanisms for paying for user contributions to capital costs ■ specify how O&M costs are to be collected and paid to the different agencies; this is particularly important for shared facilities
9. Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ proposals for implementation to list which agency will be responsible for the different improvements ■ proposed works to be undertaken by community contract

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Table 3a.3 gives examples of proposals which might arise during the planning process and would need to be detailed as part of section 3 in the suggested Action Plan structure of Table 3a.2 above. Note that not all of these will necessarily arise as part of the Action Plan.

Table 3a.3. Examples of required inputs to Local Action Plans	
Sector	Proposal for improvement
Water Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ number and location of individual connections ■ number and location of communal supply points ■ location and type of aprons and bathing enclosures ■ identification of specific user groups ■ location of existing and proposed water supply lines
Sanitation/ sewerage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ number and location of individual household latrines ■ number and location of shared latrines ■ identification of specific user groups ■ location of existing and proposed sewer lines (for sewerred sanitation only)
Drainage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ location and type of existing and new drains
Flood protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ location and height of retaining walls
Access and Paving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ location and type of paving ■ location and details of any revisions to access widths
Security lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ number, type and location of security lights ■ location of power lines and ancillary equipment (transformers etc.)
Power supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ location of individual connections
Solid waste management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ individual household collection ■ communal user group collection ■ identification of specific user groups
Community Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ location ■ plinth area ■ materials of construction

Tools to support local action planning

The following tools have been developed to support the activities required to carry out local action planning; you will find these in the following part of this section of the manual. The Framework for action planning (Table 3a.1) also makes reference to tools in other sections of the manual.

Table 3a.4. Supporting tools for local action planning

Tool	Description
1.	Preparing users and community groups for action planning
2.	Participatory information gathering
3.	The role of NGOs
4.	Initial survey and groundwork
5.	User perceptions of existing services
6.	Technical options and levels of service
7.	User demand for service improvements
8.	Gender issues
9.	Formation of user groups
10.	Cost recovery

Tool 1 Preparing users and community groups for action planning

How this tool will help you

This tool will help you with the activities:

- establishing contact; and
- preparing users for action planning listed in Table 3a.1.

Using this tool

It provides guidance on how you can:

- introduce local residents and community groups to the benefits of action planning; and
- prepare them to take an active part in that process.

Structure of the tool

The tool is structured around the following questions:

- Why involve users and community groups in action planning?
- Why is preparation for action planning required?
- Who should prepare people for action planning?
- When and where should preparation for action planning start?
- What are the stages in preparing people for action planning and what does each stage require?

Each question is now considered in turn.

Why involve users and community groups in action planning?

Service users and the community groups that represent them should be involved in action planning for the following reasons.

- **To ensure that the proposals contained in Action Plans meet their requirements.** If local people are not involved in the process, there is no guarantee that the action taken will meet their actual and perceived needs.
- **To provide access to local knowledge** Local people know things about their area that may not be obvious to outsiders. Some of this knowledge will be about social structures and relationships but they are also likely to know a lot about the location and performance of existing services.
- **To ensure that local power-brokers are involved in the planning process.** All too often, plans produced by professionals fail because they do not take into account the concerns and likely actions of local power brokers such as ward councillors and ward committee members.
- **To develop an integrated approach to the allocation of resources** Communities are not homogenous entities and different groups are likely to have different concerns and priorities. Action Plans provide an opportunity to mediate between the demands of different groups and arrive at an agreed approach to the utilisation of scarce resources.

Why is preparation for action planning required?

Preparation of service users and community groups for action planning will normally be required for two reasons.

- **To convince them of the need for action planning.** People living in low-income areas have a whole range of pressing concerns and will be reluctant to give up their time for an exercise for which they see no clear use. In particular, they may question the need for planning, saying that they already know their needs and how to achieve them.
- **To provide them with the skills required to plan effectively.** Everyone plans in one way or another but most people plan individually without ever setting things down in a formal way. Few participants in the planning exercise will have experience of formal planning, involving the need to agree shared objectives and then to prioritise those objectives. Users and the community groups that represent them will not be effective participants in the planning process unless some effort is given to provide them with these skills.

Who should prepare people for action planning?

A fieldwork team is required to prepare people to take part in action planning. It should include people who have experience of working with the communities with which you wish to engage. They may come from government departments such as community development cells and also involve NGOs that are already working with communities. See Table 3.a.1.

As you identify the members of the fieldwork team, you will need to provide them with training so that they are aware of the main features of the action planning approach. Ideally, the training should cover:

- the action planning processes to be used;
- an introduction to participatory methods, with particular emphasis on methods for ensuring that the poor and marginalised are included in the action planning process. See Tool 2 for further details.
- negotiation and conflict resolution; and
- an introduction to the way in which government systems work and the probable availability of resources.

When and where should preparation for action planning start?

As soon as a decision to adopt an action planning process has been made, you need to think about preparing users and community groups to take part in that process. It may be that you decide to carry out some pilot work to develop the planning process at the local level. Where this is the case, the initial focus should be on preparing the people living in potential pilot areas to take part in the process.

What are the stages in preparing people for action planning and what does each stage require?

The following actions may be required to prepare potential service users and the community groups that represent them for action planning.

1. Gain the confidence of potential participants.
2. Explore existing attitudes to planning.

3. Convince people of the value of planning if exploration of existing attitudes shows that this is needed.
4. Ensure that people understand the proposed planning process.

Gain the confidence of potential participants. Action planning cannot succeed if the intended participants have no confidence in the process. People may well be suspicious of government because of the latter's lack of interest or failure to deliver in the past. The best way to gain people's confidence is to talk with them in a way that convinces them that you respect them and want to hear about how they perceive their problems and possible solutions to those problems. One way of doing this is to involve groups of local people in participatory mapping. See Box T1.1.

Box T1.1. Participatory mapping

Participatory mapping is a simple process through which groups of community members are encouraged to draw maps of their own communities, indicating what they think is important. They will normally indicate all the houses or compounds, together with important facilities and physical features. Most texts on participatory mapping suggest that the maps should be drawn on the ground using locally available materials. However, experience suggests that a more conventional approach using paper and markers will normally be more appropriate in urban areas.

As the map is developed, encourage the group to indicate any social groupings within their area as this may later provide a basis for choosing representatives for the planning process. It can also provide information on particular marginalised groups, which might not always be obvious to outsiders.

Explore existing attitudes to planning. Exploring people's existing attitudes to planning will help to determine what needs to be done to ensure that they are willing to contribute to the action planning process. Use **interviews with key informants** and **focus group discussions** to explore these attitudes. Key informants might include political representatives, community 'leaders', representatives of community organisations, and local people with particular skills and knowledge. Ideally, these key informants should include those who have previously been involved in efforts to provide or obtain improved infrastructures services. When searching out local people with skills and knowledge, look particularly for those who have been involved in either construction initiatives or in activities such as health promotion, basic education and encouraging and facilitating community-based activities.

Focus groups should represent particular interest groups within the community. They might include people from particular social groups or those with particular occupations. Remember to hold focus group discussions with different age groups and with both women and men.

In addition to exploring attitudes to planning, interviews with key informants provide an opportunity to identify those who might take a leading role in the process. Ask people which people in their community have been most active in trying to improve their own situation and that of the neighbourhood. Such 'activists' are likely to be among the most receptive to the idea of action planning.

Convince people of the need for planning. It is probable that the initial investigation of people's attitudes will show that they see little need for formal planning. Where this is the case, they must be convinced of the need for planning before you can proceed to the implementation of an action planning process. How might this be done? You might:

1. Develop awareness of the problems that might arise because of failure to plan.
2. Show people the benefits that planning can bring.

Start to do the first by encouraging people to discuss the way in which decisions are made at present. Ask them to list the initiatives that they and various government agencies have taken in the area. To help them to remember what has been done, encourage people to look around the area and remind themselves of what has been done. Next ask people to consider what was good and what was bad about those initiatives. In particular, encourage them to consider the problems that might have arisen because of a lack of planning. Ask them whether the initiatives taken by government were really what they wanted and whether they have other priorities that have not been considered by government.

By the end of this process, people should have started to think about the weaknesses of ad-hoc unplanned approaches to service provision. You can then perhaps ask them to consider how things might have been different if there had been an Action Plan *to which they had contributed*.

Where suitable examples exist, it may be possible to arrange a visit to an area where people have been involved in an action planning process. Assuming that the action planning process has been successful, this will provide them with clear evidence of the advantages of planning. Try to ensure that there are good opportunities for the people from the two communities to talk with each

other. People are more likely to be convinced by what is said by people like themselves than by ideas presented by external professionals who may speak and think in a way that is not familiar to them.

Box T1.2. Who should be targeted?

While the ideal is that all community members should be convinced of the need for an action planning process, the reality is that some people will become more involved in the process than others. It is best if you concentrate your efforts on these people, who will then provide a lead for other people. They may include recognised community leaders but equally they may be people who see a role for themselves in the action planning process and are willing to work hard to fulfil that role. Where your initial investigations have shown that there are distinct social groups within the community, you should try to ensure that all social groups are represented. Do not forget that women make up about 50% of the population and that their priorities are likely to be different from those of men. Their concerns will only be addressed if they are given a prominent role in the planning process.

Explain the process. Once there is at least a basic acceptance of the need for planning, the next step is to explain the process to people. This will be easier if the planning process is built around existing structures and systems. This might mean, for instance that the planning process is based on existing groupings wherever possible. An example from Sri Lanka is provided in Box T1.3.

Box T1.3. Working through existing organisations and organisational structures

In 1984, the Government of Sri Lanka launched its Million Houses Programme (MHP), a programme designed to bring about improvements in housing at an affordable price. The Urban Housing Division of the National Housing Development Authority (NHDA) was formed to deal with urban housing needs in 1985. One important aspect of its programme was a participatory planning approach that brought together community members in low income areas, officials of the NHDA and employees of the local authority in order to develop a 'micro plan' for each low-income settlement.

The vehicles for project implementation at the local level were community development councils (CDCs). The CDC concept had already been developed in the course of a previous UNICEF project that focused mainly on health. The NHDA project designers decided to use the CDCs rather than develop new organisations specifically for the micro-planning work. This did not mean that every settlement already had a CDC but existing CDCs were used where they existed and new CDCs were set up where necessary. This is a good example of working from what already exists rather than setting up a completely new structure.

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When explaining the process, remember the following simple rules:

- keep it simple;
- be clear about what people will be expected to do; and
- be clear about the intended outcome.

Base your explanation on the processes set out in sections 3a, 3b and 3c of this manual.

For local plans involving a small area and relatively few people, it may be possible to speak to everyone who may be affected by the plan. For larger areas a better approach will be to identify people who can take the message to other people in the community. You might for instance identify a person from each area to be included in the planning process and involve them in a workshop to explain the process to be followed. They can then carry out a similar exercise with people living in their own areas.

Tool 2 Participatory information gathering

How this tool will help you

This tool will provide you with an overview of participatory information gathering in relation to urban services provision for urban poor groups. It does not go into the detailed application of the various techniques described, but refers you on to other sources of information. It also provides a number of examples based on a study of Operations and Maintenance performance in an Indian city. It will help you with the activities

- team building; and
- preparing users for action planning

in the Framework for local action planning (Table 3a.1).

Using this tool

There exists a wide range of participatory tools and techniques; use Table T2.1 to compare the advantages and disadvantages of these. Refer to the examples to see the value and richness of the information which can emerge. Read this in conjunction with Tool 1 on preparing community groups for action planning.

Users can tell you about the service

In any performance measurement system for services such as water supply and sanitation provision, it is essential to obtain the views of the users of the service. Whilst the importance of consumer perceptions is clearly understood by the commercial and industrial sectors of the economy, user perceptions about water and sanitation services are frequently neglected.

So how do the users perceive the operating performance of the service? An important feature of this is the need to be *inclusive*; that is, to include the views of the urban poor as well as those in middle and high income areas of cities. This means that reviewing customer complaints is unlikely to be sufficient, and we need to look more deeply into using participative techniques to elicit the views of the poor who rarely have access to the formal channels through which complaints are made.

Participatory approaches

The methodologies used for collecting information clearly depend upon the local setting. It may be that participation is being developed through other programmes, and it is thereby possible to pick up on service related issues relatively easily as community groups will already have been exposed to participatory information gathering.

There is a place for both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative methods expose ‘what’ and ‘how much’, whereas qualitative methods have explanatory value and answer the question ‘why’. This is one of the great strengths of participatory methods. Finding out whether something is working or not may be insufficient to plan effective remedial actions; we need to know and understand *why* there are problems to make sure that the root causes can be addressed, rather than just the symptoms.

Table T2.1 reviews some techniques which employ varying degrees of participation.

Table T2.1. Some participatory methods

Method	Advantages	Disadvantages	Alternatives/Keep in mind
Public meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The audience will contain many different interests, with different levels of understanding and sympathy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ It is difficult to keep to a fixed agenda ■ Only a few people get a chance to have a say 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify and meet key interests informally ■ Run workshop sessions for different interest groups ■ Bring people together after the workshop sessions in a report-back seminar
Formal survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Questionnaires, studies and in-depth discussion groups can be a good way to start the participation process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Surveys are insufficient on their own 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Surveys require expert design and piloting ■ Surveyors need training ■ Survey design can be part of a process which leads to action
Consultative committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Some focus for decision-making will be necessary in anything beyond a simple consultation process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Even if a committee is elected or drawn from key interest groups it may not be a channel for reaching most people ■ People invited to join a committee may feel uncomfortable about being seen as representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The committee can help to plan the participation process ■ Surveys, workshops and informal meetings to identify other people who may become actively involved ■ A range of groups working on different issues
Working through NGOs/CBOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Voluntary bodies such as NGOs/CBOs are a major route to communities of interest and may have people and resources to contribute to the participation process ■ They have a wealth of experience and are essential allies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Voluntary bodies however are not 'the community' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ There will be many small community groups who are not part of the more formalised voluntary sector ■ Voluntary groups have their own agendas; they are not neutral
Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ If done well, the work belongs to the local people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Care needs to be exercised in choosing appropriate tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A range of tools are available (see the following section)

Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA)

Time and resource constraints often do not permit extensive social research to be carried out. Instead, the techniques of participatory rapid appraisal (PRA) can be used. An important feature of using participatory methods is that local people are directly involved in the processes of data gathering and analysis. The findings belong to them rather than to the outsiders (always assuming that the PRA work is well done). This gives a wider context to PRA, in that it contributes to a shared learning agenda and local capacity building as well as to the process of information exchange. The following summary of PRA sources and activities is taken from Section 2.2 of the DFID *Guidance Manual on Water and Sanitation Programmes* (WELL, 1998).

Some PRA Techniques

- Secondary data sources, maps and reports
- Direct observation
- Case studies, work, and incident histories from local experts
- Transect walks: systematically walking through an area with local guides, observing, asking, listening and learning about relevant issues
- Group discussions of different kinds (casual, focus, community)
- Mapping and modelling to show local world views
- Matrix scoring and ranking exercises to compare preferences and conditions
- Well-being grouping to establish local criteria for deprivation and disadvantage
- Time-lines and trend and change analysis to show chronologies of events and to analyse local trends and causes of change
- Seasonal calendars and daily time use analysis to show work patterns and activities

For more details on these and other tools see Narayan (1993).

Using participatory approaches

Participatory approaches are used to find out about users perceptions of services and their demand for improvements. It is important to appreciate that the whole process is quite different from the strict question-and-answer method which characterises the objective external evaluation methods. Therefore in using participatory approaches, it is important to define key objectives

and to keep these in mind when briefing the facilitators of, for example, the PRA approach. Section 6 of the Manual includes some examples of the use of PRA with respect to Operation and Maintenance.

A further benefit of using participatory approaches is that we find out a lot of relevant background information about the community in question. This can be crucially important to planning remedial measures and subsequent improvements. Such findings are often qualitative in nature; nevertheless, such information is very important in building up a picture of the perception of services in a low income community.

Whilst the more general picture is invaluable, it is important to ensure that PRA finds out from the users where the main problems lie, and looks at options for overcoming them.

Do's and don'ts

The following list indicates some of the key points which should be taken into consideration in the collection of information using participatory methods.

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DO	DON'T	ABOVE ALL
■ Find out about taboos and norms	■ Violate taboos and norms	■ Listen and be interested
■ Stimulate people to talk	■ Demand appreciation	■ Respect the people, their perceptions and their knowledge
■ Provide facts and information	■ Use abstract language	
■ Build up a dialogue	■ Interrupt, blame, suggest or promise	
■ Be neutral and objective	■ Side with opinion leaders or agitate	
■ Assist people to evaluate	■ Manipulate or create needs	
■ Be patient		
■ Be creative, adaptable and innovative		
■ Learn from 'errors'		
■ Use analogy		
■ Use a variety of PRA techniques		
■ Cross-check information		

References

Narayan, D. P., (1993) *Participatory Evaluation: Tools for managing change in water and sanitation*, World Bank Technical Paper No. 207, World Bank, Washington DC

WELL, (1998) *Guidance Manual on Water Supply and Sanitation Programmes*

Tool 3 The role of NGOs

How this tool will help you

This tool will help you to understand the ways in which NGOs can be involved in upgrading programmes. It will do this by describing the ways in which NGOs work with local communities, keeping in mind their potential strengths and weaknesses.

Using this tool

Read the first part of the tool if you require information on the starting points for NGO involvement in service provision. Refer to Table T3.1 for a summary of the tasks that might be undertaken by NGOs and the way in which the starting point affects likely NGO roles. The final part provides further information on NGO roles in these various tasks.

Possible starting points for NGO involvement in service provision

NGOs as a catalyst for people's own efforts. Most low-income areas suffer from service deficiencies, because government has either not provided basic services or failed to maintain those that are provided. In such circumstances, community members sometimes combine to provide and manage a shared facility, for instance a well or a local sewer. There are two problems with such unaided attempts to provide services:

- the design and construction are often technically unsound; and
- lack of co-ordination means that actions are often small-scale and ad-hoc.

NGOs can provide assistance to overcome these problems by:

- providing technical advice and assistance;
- encouraging people to see problems in their overall context; and
- helping them to organise themselves so as to tackle their problems in a co-ordinated way.

In effect, the role of the NGO is to act as a catalyst, persuading people to work together and, where appropriate, guiding their efforts. NGOs that have acted

in this way include the Orangi Pilot Project (OPP) in Pakistan, SPARC in India and Sevanatha in Sri Lanka. The important point to note is that this type of action is always started either by the NGO itself or by local community leaders working in association with the NGO.

NGOs as facilitators of government projects and programmes. In recent years, there has been increased emphasis on the need for community involvement in ‘official’ upgrading programmes. Since few service providing departments and agencies have experience of working with communities, some other way of linking government with communities must be found. Specialist community development cells within municipalities or a social welfare ministry may be used for this purpose where they exist. However, it is also common to assume that NGOs can and should fulfil this role.

This manual is concerned primarily with government-initiated programmes and so the main focus will be on the role of NGOs as facilitators. It is commonly assumed that this role requires that NGOs are contracted to government departments. Another model, in which NGOs operate as partners and act as catalysts as well as facilitators is described in Box T3.1.

Box T3.1. NGOs as partners in government programmes

It is possible to develop an upgrading programme on the basis that any proposal can be considered for inclusion in the programme provided that it meets the programme’s basic requirements. These requirements will normally be that the proposal is presented by a group representing the community and conforms with standard programme guidelines in such areas as the arrangements for cost-sharing, the involvement of disadvantaged community members and perhaps the development of an action plan to guide investment.

NGOs would be essential to the success of this approach, working with communities to help them to determine their needs and develop proposals for funding. In effect, NGOs would be working as project partners. This model goes beyond the ‘NGO as facilitator’ model in two respects.

- The focus of the NGO and the community groups that it is supporting may go beyond the sectors covered by the project or programme so that they see the latter as one among several possible sources of funding and support.
- The role of the NGO is to bring communities into the project or programme rather than working with a pre-selected community.

This is a conceptually attractive approach in that it ensures that a project really responds to demand. It has two potential drawbacks. The first of these is the possible difficulty in ensuring the involvement of the poorest communities in the project or programme. Training and orientation to sensitise NGO staff to the need to engage with the poorest

Box T3.1. (continued)

communities will help to overcome this problem. The second problem is that NGOs may not be willing to ‘compromise’ their principles sufficiently to allow them to work in the way required by a government programme. This is a potentially difficult problem. The best way to overcome it will be to ensure that potential NGO partners are fully involved in the project design.

Note that a mechanism will have to be found to cover the costs of ‘partnering’ NGOs. One approach might be to pay them a ‘management fee’ for the projects that they facilitate. Another might be to register NGOs as partners and pay them an agreed yearly amount.

How does the starting point affect the role of NGOs?

The starting point for NGO involvement in service provision is likely to affect the tasks that the NGO is called upon to perform and may affect the way in which it approaches them. Table T3.1 provides further information in relation to this point.

Table T3.1. Likely effect of starting point on the tasks to be undertaken by NGOs

Task	NGO as facilitator of government/community interaction	NGO as catalyst for community action
Develop community awareness of problems	Main focus on problems that the government project or programme is designed to solve.	All problems can be considered in first instance.
Develop community awareness of possibilities	Focus on how communities can engage with government project to solve problems.	Focus on what community can do to either solve problems itself or persuade others to help to solve them.
Assist people to organise themselves	NGOs will normally work within parameters set by project.	Different NGOs may take different approaches.
Facilitate action planning process	NGO personnel may take leading role. Government may engage external NGO as workshop organiser/facilitator.	NGO personnel may take leading role in promoting and organising action planning process.

Table T3.1. continued		
Task	NGO as facilitator of government/ community interaction	NGO as catalyst for community action
Provide support during design and implementation	NGO may facilitate links between technical staff and communities.	NGO may develop systems and provide technical support.
Develop monitoring and evaluation systems	An external NGO with relevant skills may be engaged to develop aspects of a project/ programme monitoring and evaluation system.	NGO may develop information system.
Carry out impact assessment	An external NGO is sometimes engaged to carry out an impact assessment.	May be done informally but rarely formally.

The remainder of this tool considers the roles of NGOs in relation to the various tasks listed in Table T3.1.

Develop community awareness of problems

The important point here is to be aware of what NGOs are to be expected to do. If their role is to facilitate links between government and communities for a specific project or programme, they must focus on the sectors that the project will cover. If an NGO is working as a catalyst for community development and action, it will probably have a rather wider remit. However, it must be able to identify the problems that the project or programme is designed to tackle and ensure that the community is aware of those problems and of the possibilities for tackling them presented by the project or programme.

Sometimes NGOs have experience of participatory techniques but have limited understanding of how these techniques can be used in pursuit of the target of improved service provision. In such cases, NGO personnel will probably need to be given training and guidance on how participatory appraisal methods can be used in a problem-orientated way.

Some basic rules for awareness-raising are presented in Box T3.2.

Box T3.2. Two basic rules for awareness-raising

1. Keep working methods as simple as possible. For instance, use slides showing the adverse impacts of poor sanitation and drainage on the local environment to develop community awareness and promote discussion on the need for improved services.
2. Whenever possible, use methods that help people to identify problems themselves. For instance, encourage community members to make their own videos and record interviews on problems caused by service deficiencies. Where some NGOs have experience of using such methods, it may be appropriate to arrange workshops at which they can share their expertise with other, less experienced NGOs.

Develop community awareness of possibilities

Some NGOs will have technical expertise that enables them to help communities to identify the possibilities for service improvement in any given situation. However, many NGOs are more comfortable with the human than the technical aspects of development. Beware of NGOs with a strong commitment to one technology since they are likely to assume that this technology should be used in all circumstances.

Where an NGO has social expertise but little technical knowledge, there are two options.

1. To provide training to the NGO's personnel to provide them with the knowledge required to guide communities on the possibilities open to them.
2. To arrange for the NGO to work in association with another organisation that has the requisite technical knowledge. This organisation might be a government department, a consulting company or another NGO.

The second option will often be the better one, provided that the two organisations can agree on the approach to be followed. A good approach will be for the NGO to work with community members to identify problems and needs, after which the technical organisation presents the available technical options and some guidance on their limitations, advantages and disadvantages. The NGO might then act as facilitator in the dialogue between community members and technical specialists on the choice of technology and approach.

Assisting people to organise themselves

Because they are people-centred and reasonably flexible, NGOs are often better placed than government organisations to help communities to organise themselves for action planning. This is particularly true if they are already known and trusted in the community. However, not all NGOs have equal commitment and expertise. When considering the use of NGOs to help people to organise, you should ask the following questions:

- Do existing NGOs with the required approach and skills exist? If not, how might they be provided with the required training and orientation? It may be that NGOs with good experience of community organisation can be used to provide guidance to less experienced local NGOs.
- Is there clarity about **why** people should organise?
- Is there clarity about **how** people should organise?

The best way to tackle the last two questions will be for all stakeholders, including NGOs, to agree on the approach to be taken **before** extensive work starts in the field.

Facilitating action planning

Their people-centred approach can make NGOs a good choice for facilitating action planning. Indeed, the identification of problems and possible solutions, the development of community organisational structures and action planning should be viewed together rather than separately. NGO personnel that have worked with local communities should certainly be involved in the action planning process.

Specialist skills are required to facilitate workshops. It may be best if people from NGOs other than those who have been working closely with communities facilitate action planning workshops. NGOs with experience of participatory approaches are among the most likely to possess the specialist skills required for this task.

Support during design and implementation

NGOs may provide inputs at the design and implementation stages in two ways.

1. By providing technical inputs.
2. By providing a link between technical personnel and the community.

NGOs that act as catalysts for community effort are more likely to fulfil the first role. In many cases, these NGOs will have a more positive view of appropriate standards and methods of working than government engineers. Nevertheless, you should ensure that NGOs do not attempt to take on tasks that fall beyond their technical competence. If in doubt, work with the NGO and other stakeholders to reach agreement on the overall technical approach, design details and design standards. Where necessary, test aspects of the approach to be used so that you have hard information upon which choices can be made.

Designers need to liaise with communities on decisions such as the service level to be provided and the siting of communal facilities. NGOs that are working closely with the community may be in a good position to facilitate this liaison. Later, trouble-free implementation of schemes is much more likely if local residents have access to channels through which they can express their concerns to government departments and their contractors. NGOs should not normally be involved directly in this liaison but they may be consulted on how effective channels of communication may be established.

Monitoring and evaluation/impact assessment

It may be appropriate to involve NGOs with suitable experience in the development of monitoring and evaluation systems and the collection of information for such systems. NGOs may also be called upon to carry out impact assessments. When considering such roles for NGOs, think about the task in hand and the knowledge and skills required to undertake it. In general, only those NGOs with considerable specialist knowledge of information systems and impact assessment are likely to have the resources to develop systems. Similarly, participatory evaluation and impact assessment require special skills and only NGOs with appropriate resources should be considered for these tasks. In such cases, the role of the NGO will be essentially that of a contractor.

Tool 4 Initial survey and groundwork

How this tool will help you

This tool will help you to carry out the activity *Find out what is already there* in the Framework for local action planning (see Section 3a, Table 3a.1). The tool contains a series of checklists which you can use to help you in the technical surveys which need to be carried out to establish what infrastructure exists and where it is located. Note that this only provides part of the answer; we need the information obtained by finding out about users perceptions of the existing services as outlined in Tool 5 to complete the picture.

Using this tool

Use the following checklists for each service sector to identify services in the neighbourhood; remember to make full use of any available maps and plans which you have obtained from the municipality and utilities (see Section 3b Table 3b.1, Framework for action planning for networked services). This work is objective in nature and needs to involve an engineer and a surveyor. However, note that it is essential that the survey team ask local residents what they know about the location of service lines.

You should also look at Section 3b, Tool 13 *Assessing system capacity*; this is aimed at the secondary and primary networked infrastructure, but it has important implications for the local neighbourhood (tertiary) services.

General points

It is important to establish basic information such as:

- initial definition of boundaries of the upgrading areas;
- estimated number of households and population;
- land tenure status; and
- socio-economic status of residents.

These issues are best addressed using participatory methods rather than as part of the ‘checklist’ surveys described in this Tool; see Tools 1,2 and 3.

Access and Paving

Date of survey

Survey Team

Name of site

Location

Sketch plan of the site indicating:

- road and access way widths;
- distinguish between through routes and access-only streets;
- any encroachments or aspects which hinder access;
- paved widths (when less than the total right of way); and
- service lines (water, drainage, sewerage, power) which restrict access.

Describe the type and condition of existing surfacing

Describe any drainage problems which occur as a result of inadequate surfacing

Predominant type of traffic on the various roads

Location of institutions, commercial and industrial premises which generate high traffic volumes and loadings

Any further comments

Water supply

Date of survey

Survey Team

Name of site

Location

Sources of water: piped supply; tubewell; open well; rainwater; others

Number and location of drinking water and bathing water supply points:
public standposts, house taps, others (indicate on site plan)

Reliability of water supply; supply times (daily and seasonal)

Approximate pressure of water supplied (piped supply only)

Visual quality, taste and odour of water from each source

Size and adequacy of local secondary distribution mains

Sewage disposal system: leaching pit; septic tank; sewer; open drain; other

Any further comments

Drainage

Date of survey

Survey Team

Name of site

Location

On your site map indicate:

- existing surface water drains, showing dimensions;
- drainage outfall points;
- secondary drains, showing dimensions; and
- low-lying areas (depressions) which give problems.

Sullage disposal for households and public water supply points

Physical condition of site drains and outfalls

Physical condition of secondary drains

Frequency and causes of flooding

Road surfacing and paving

Any further comments

Solid waste management

Date of survey

Survey Team

Name of site

Location

Evidence and extent of problems: waste in drains; roadside and indiscriminate dumping (mark on map)

Location and condition of communal containers and transfer station (if existing)

Approximate generation rates from households, shops, commercial and small industry premises

Apparent composition of waste

Collection frequency from collection points

What is the involvement of municipal and private sweepers

How regularly are streets swept

Do people have bins or containers inside houses

Do households sell recyclable components of waste

Any further comments

Power supply and street lighting

Date of survey

Survey Team

Name of site

Location

On your map of the site indicate:

- overhead or underground power cables;
- transformers; and
- street lights.

Approximate number of household power connections with meters

What electrical appliances are most commonly used in the home

Evidence of illegal power connections

Type of street light: lamp source (fluorescent, mercury vapour, high or low pressure sodium, other)

Mounting details of street lights (wall or pole mounted)

On-off switching times and switching mechanism

Approximate number of faulty street lights

Any further comments

Sanitation

Date of survey

Survey Team

Name of site

Location

Anal cleansing practices

Latrine types: household, on-plot, shared, communal, none: if none, locate the defecation areas

General condition of latrines

Excreta disposal system: on/off plot leach pit or septic tank; sewer, open drain, bucket, other

Awareness of importance of sanitation and hygiene

Sources of water for drinking and bathing

Users comments on the effectiveness of their sanitation and how it could be improved

Any further comments

Tool 5 User perceptions of existing services

How this tool will help you

This tool will help you to carry out the activity *Find out what is already there* in the Framework for local action planning (see Section 3a, Table 3a.1). The tool contains a checklist of activities which will help you to find out about users perceptions of the existing services in their neighbourhood and in their homes. This in turn gives useful indications of what the demand for improved services is likely to be and is a way of starting off the whole process of discussing demand with the users. These activities need to be carried out in a participatory way, using some of the participatory techniques described in Tool 2. You need to use the information which you find out here together with that obtained from the initial physical survey described in Tool 4.

Using this tool

Use the Activity Checklist in Table T5.1 to investigate users perceptions for all of the existing services including:

- water supply;
- sanitation;
- drainage;
- flood protection;
- access and paving;
- power and security lighting;
- solid waste management; and
- community buildings.

In addition to finding out what people think, you will also uncover important information relating to roles and responsibilities, that is, who does what. Note that activities and users concerns with any other service issues not included above should also be explored.

3 a: PREPARING LOCAL ACTION PLANS

Table T5.1. Users perceptions	
Activity checklist	Findings
What facilities and services do residents perceive to be lacking?	
What are the actual problems with the day to day operation and maintenance of existing facilities and services?	
Whose responsibility are these problems perceived to be?	
How have problems with the provision of facilities and services been resolved, with particular reference to internal local initiatives?	
Identify actions related to service provision carried out by residents; identify whether residents undertake work themselves or contract a third party	
What are the attitudes and perceptions amongst the users concerning roles and responsibilities for O&M?	

SERVICES FOR THE URBAN POOR

Table T5.1. (continued)

Activity checklist	Findings
Identify actions related to service provision carried out by statutory bodies such as the municipality	
Is there evidence of facilities being cared for by users?	
Is there evidence of facilities being misused?	
Are there any clearly defined user groups, for example, for certain sources of water including water supply points, latrines?	
Are there any mechanisms through which users can approach city institutions; if so what are they and how effectively do they work ?	
What is the potential for promoting increased ownership and care of facilities through users becoming more proactive?	

3a: PREPARING LOCAL ACTION PLANS

Table T5.1. (continued)	
Activity checklist	Findings
What are the possible routes and mechanisms which could help users to become more proactive?	
Are there any clearly defined user groups for example, for certain sources of water including water supply points, latrines?	
Are there any mechanisms through which users can approach city institutions; if so what are they and how effectively do they work?	
What is the potential for promoting increased ownership and care of facilities through users becoming more proactive?	
What are the possible routes and mechanisms which could help users to become more proactive?	

Tool 6 Technical options and levels of service

How this tool will help you

This tool will help you to carry out the activities *Explore technical options and costs* in the Framework for local action planning (see Table 3a.1. Section 3a). The tool provides a listing of the most common technical options for improving services and includes some basic maintenance tasks which are theoretically within the capability of most user groups. For more detailed guidance on operations and maintenance please refer to Section 6 of this manual. This tool also gives additional guidance on factors which affect levels of service and on estimating indicative costs.

Using this tool

Use the listing of technical options by service sector in Table T6.1 and the factors affecting levels of service in Table T6.2 to guide the discussion during meetings with service users to assist in the following:

- determining which options are technically feasible in the locality (for example if there is no groundwater, handpumps are not an option);
- drawing up a short list of possible options and levels of service which users are interested in and which will form the basis for more detailed exploration of specific designs and costs.

Use Table T6.2 to assist in discussions with the users about different levels of service; the subsequent guidance assists in estimating indicative costs for the preferred options.

Technical options for different services

Table T6.1 lists a wide range of possible technical options. Whilst in theory there is a wide range of infrastructure options from which the users can choose, in practice the choice is limited by both the existing infrastructure and the physical characteristics of the site. This will rapidly become apparent during the discussions you hold.

Further details of technical options are given in *Services for Shelter* by Andrew Cotton and Richard Franceys.

3 a: PREPARING LOCAL ACTION PLANS

Table T6.1. Service options and maintenance requirements

Water:	
<p>OPTION</p> <p>Standpost Handpump Washing aprons Bathing enclosures: Bamboo screens 5" brick walls Informal rainwater collection</p>	<p>MAINTENANCE</p> <p>Tap replacement; report leaks Minor repairs; report major faults Cleaning</p> <p>Replace every two years; cleaning Cleaning Cleaning of collection containers</p>
Sanitation:	
<p>OPTION</p> <p>Latrines Individual household latrine User group shared latrine</p> <p>Disposal system On-site pit Septic tank Sewerage</p>	<p>MAINTENANCE</p> <p>Daily cleaning Daily cleaning</p> <p>Pit emptying Tank emptying Report defects</p>
Drainage:	
<p>OPTION</p> <p>Earth fill low lying areas Road-as-drain Roadside drain</p>	<p>MAINTENANCE</p> <p>Occasional replenishment Regular sweeping in front of house Regular cleaning in front of house</p>
Pond improvement:	
<p>OPTION</p> <p>Laterite walling Paved surround Beautification</p>	<p>MAINTENANCE</p> <p>Occasional repair Regular sweeping Care of plants and trees</p>

SERVICES FOR THE URBAN POOR

Table T6.1. (continued)	
Paving:	
<p>OPTION</p> <p>Gravel fill Brick on edge Unsealed road metal Surface dressing Bituminous carpet Cement concrete (CC) Laterite block paving Precast stepping stones</p>	<p>MAINTENANCE</p> <p>Occasional replenishment Replace broken bricks Hole patching Report defects Report defects Report defects Replace broken or missing slabs Replace broken or missing slabs</p>
Security Lighting:	
<p>OPTION</p> <p>RCC poles, 3-line non-insulated cable Wall-mounted single insulated cable Lantern fittings</p>	<p>MAINTENANCE</p> <p>Report defects Report defects Bulb replacement</p>
Power Supply:	
<p>OPTION</p> <p>Individual metered connection</p>	<p>MAINTENANCE</p> <p>Report defects</p>
Solid waste:	
<p>OPTION</p> <p>Household container Communal Masonry enclosure</p> <p>Employ local sweeper</p>	<p>MAINTENANCE</p> <p>Collect household waste Deposit household waste; avoid spilling waste Payment for services</p>
Community Hall:	
<p>OPTION</p> <p>Existing building New building Renovation of existing building Extension of existing building</p>	<p>MAINTENANCE</p> <p>Management, cleaning and repair Management, cleaning and repair Management, cleaning and repair Management, cleaning and repair</p>
NB. Management includes payment of service charges for water, power and local taxes.	

Some factors affecting levels of service

We can think of the different technical options listed in Table T6.1 as offering different *levels of service*. For example, the individual water connection or latrine offers the user a higher level of service than a water point or latrine which is shared with other users. Table T6.2 lists some specific points which will help you to focus on the key issues in relation to levels of service during the meetings with users when you are trying to find out what people want.

Table 6.2. Factors affecting levels of service by sector	
Sector	Factors which affect level of service
Water Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ individual household connection ■ communal user group connection
Sanitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ individual household latrine ■ user group shared latrine
Drainage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ extent of drainage systems ■ type of drains (e.g. open channel, road-as-drain) ■ materials of construction
Flood protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ extent of flood protection determined by retaining wall height
Access and paving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ increase in access widths ■ extent of all-weather access ■ type of paving ■ type of traffic using the road
Security lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ number of security lights ■ type of lantern
Power supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ individual connections
Solid waste management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ individual household collection ■ communal user group collection
Community Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ plinth area ■ materials of construction

Calculating the costs of options and levels of service

In practice, users make choices about the services they want by balancing the perceived benefits against the costs incurred by them. They must therefore be aware of all of the costs involved when making a choice. The costs are made up of several components:

- capital costs of construction or taking a service connection (for example, water and power utilities or the municipality may have standard charges for making an individual user connection);
- operating costs, which cover the monthly charges payable to the water and power utilities or the municipality, including property taxes; and
- maintenance costs to make repairs in order to keep the facilities in good working order; in some but not all cases the maintenance costs will be covered by the monthly charges.

In order for users to make choices about levels of service, they must have information about the relative costs. What is required is an *indicative unit cost* for each of the options. This is dealt with in Section 5 of this manual on Programme implementation which describes the use of standard engineering details. Essentially, these give unit costs for different items of infrastructure. For example, if a particular type of paving costs so much per square metre to construct it is relatively simple to work out the cost of paving a known area. It becomes relatively simple and quick for the Programme engineers to give residents and service users indicative costs to assist them in decision making. This is easily built into a spreadsheet.

Note that it is essential that the approach to cost estimating is mechanised through the use of spreadsheets. Users are being asked complex questions about both the relative priority they attach to the different services and to different levels of service within each sector. This can generate a large number of possibilities for every user group; without this form of automation, it is impossible to turn round the cost estimation in a realistic time. See Tools 15 and 16 associated with Section 5.

References

Cotton A.P. and Franceys R.W.A.,(1991) *Services for Shelter*, Liverpool Planning Manual 3, Liverpool University Press.

Tool 7 User demand for service improvements

How this tool will help you

‘Demand’ is about finding out what people actually want and the extent to which they are prepared to commit the resources at their disposal. This tool will help you to carry out the three related activities (see Section 3a, Table 3a.1) in the Framework for local action planning:

- assess users priorities and demand;
- review costs; and
- reassess user priorities and demand.

Remember that you have already gathered useful information on user demand using participatory methods through your work on *Users perceptions of existing services* (Tool 5). We now build on this earlier work to help you to find out more about:

- the relative demand for different services;
- the need to actively stimulate demand for certain services such as sanitation; and
- using what people already pay as an indicator of demand for different levels of service.

Using this tool

The activities relating to demand assessment described in this tool need to be carried out in a participatory way with the service users. See Tools 1, 2 and 3 for further guidance. It is likely that a range of techniques will be required, and this will need the support of skilled facilitators; NGOs may have an important role to play in assisting you here.

As part of the preparation for this work, it is crucial to make sure that all of the team including external facilitators understand what we refer to and describe below as the ‘financial rules of the game’ for the upgrading programme (see below in *Who pays for what*). If you carry out the work on assessing the relative demand for different services and on assessing what people already pay, this will lead you to clear inputs to the Local Action Plan.

Also included at the end of this tool is a section on promoting the demand for services. This is particularly relevant to sanitation and is a longer term issue which may merit a separate programme component.

For further information and guidance on aspects of willingness to pay see the DFID *Guidance Manual on Water Supply and Sanitation Programmes* p39 (WELL 1998) for a summary of techniques.

Who pays for what?

The information about the relative costs of different components of infrastructure and different levels of service is at the centre of the discussions and negotiations about demand. The real issue is where the money comes from and in the case of grant or loan funding, what restrictions there are on spending it. There are a number of possibilities:

- service users pay all of the costs themselves;
- matching grants where an agency puts up the same amount as, or a fixed percentage of, the service users contribution;
- there is a local development budget for a particular area which can be allocated according to the collective decision of the local residents/service users; and
- restrictions are placed on the way in which the local development budget can be used in order to satisfy objectives of the funding institution; how much user choice is there?

There are therefore important choices to be made. For example:

- are some householders willing to pay the full cost for installing individual connections and pay the monthly tariff?
- how much of the available development budget are user groups and the wider community willing to allocate to improving specific services?

These issues are at the centre of the following discussions on demand which you will have with residents. It is clearly essential that indicative costs for possible options have been estimated as outlined in Tool 6.

It is essential that both the programme implementing team and the service users thoroughly understand what the 'financial rules of the game' are when embarking on these (or indeed any) types of demand assessment.

Relative demand for different services

Assessing the demand for improved services in urban upgrading programmes is not an easy matter. Firstly, you need to assess the relative priority which people put on the different services:

- water supply;
- sanitation;
- drainage;
- flood protection;
- access and paving;
- power and security lighting;
- solid waste management; and
- community buildings.

This can be quite difficult to assess, particularly where user groups are likely to be involved and where the services are ‘common’, such as storm drainage. A variety of the participatory techniques described in Tools 1 and 2 need to be used, but the key point is that there needs to be some way of confining the discussions to that which is realistic so that people are able to trade off the perceived benefits of one service with those of another. This is where the indicative costs and sources of finance are crucially important:

- how much will a particular option cost?;
- where is the money coming from: if there is a local development budget, how much is available and what are the restrictions on its use?

Secondly, there are issues about different levels of service, for example whether to pay extra for a house connection rather than a shared service. There is also the possibility that particular user groups wish to take higher service levels.

If individual households want to pay for individual service connections using their own resources, this is relatively straightforward and can be negotiated directly with the service provider. Matters become more complicated when users have to express their priorities for different services and to apportion a development budget across different service sectors.

What do people pay for existing services?

When outsiders visit urban poor areas, they often get the impression that services are totally lacking. This is rarely the case. Residents have often invested their own resources to try to make things better; they may pay significant amounts of money (in relation to their family income) to obtain water from private taps and to use latrines. These are the costs which poor people pay in order to cope; they may be paying a high price for a poor service.

Assessing how much people already pay to access services is a very useful starting point in dealing with user priorities and demand, as it gives an indication of peoples' willingness to pay. A checklist is provided in Table T7.1. The point is that households may spend quite a large proportion of their income accessing poor quality services. The upgrading programme has the potential to deliver much improved services, but these must be pitched at a level which people are willing to pay for.

Table T7.1. Assessing what people already pay

Activity Checklist	Findings
<p>How much capital cost have families already invested in services both on their plot, amongst a group of other users and in the community at large for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ water ■ sanitation ■ access & paving ■ protecting their dwellings from flooding ■ drainage ■ solid waste removal ■ power & security lighting ■ community buildings 	
<p>How much do people pay in recurrent cost for accessing and maintaining those services. This applies particularly to water supply, power supply and sanitation.</p>	

The information you obtain about what people already pay is very useful; in your discussions about priorities and levels of service with service users, it helps you to match up the likely costs of different options with the ‘price range’ which users are already used to and can sustain. Of course, they may want to spend either more or less. This is particularly important with regard to the recurrent costs for operation and maintenance. The capital costs may come from the development budget, but the recurrent costs (at least) must be paid for by the users, and the information on what people already pay is useful in matching up service levels on the basis of sustaining recurrent costs.

Output from user demand investigations

The outcome of these discussions with users has to be transformed into specific proposals to be included in the Local Action Plan. Table T7.2 gives examples of the sort of practical details which are needed; if you keep these in mind during your meetings and discussions it will help you to keep a clear focus on the information that is needed.

Table T7.2. Examples of required inputs to Local Action Plans

Sector	Inputs to Local Action Plans
Water Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ number and location of individual connections ■ number and location of communal supply points ■ location and type of aprons and bathing enclosures ■ identification of specific user groups ■ location and capacity of water supply lines
Sanitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ number and location of individual household latrines ■ number and location of shared latrines ■ identification of specific user groups
Drainage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ location, type and capacity of drains
Flood protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ location and height of retaining walls
Access & paving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ location and type of paving ■ location and details of any revisions to access widths
Security lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ number, type and location of security lights ■ location of power lines and ancillary equipment (transformers etc)

Table T7.2. (continued)

Sector	Inputs to Local Action Plans
Power supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ location of individual connections
Solid waste management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ individual household collection ■ communal user group collection ■ identification of specific user groups
Community Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ location ■ plinth area ■ materials of construction

Converging on a solution

Having used participatory techniques to assess peoples’ priorities for services and what they already pay, you are now in a position to discuss possible improvements to the various services. Agree a preliminary list of improvements and proceed to the next stage in the Framework (refer back to Table 3a.1) which is to explore technical options which can satisfy these initial demands expressed by the users. The framework leads you through the process whereby you estimate costs for the initial proposals, discuss these with the users and then modify the original proposals accordingly.

There can be important demonstration effect whereby demand develops during and after implementation; people see the advantages and benefits of certain service improvements when they are in place with others using them. This is where a demand based approach becomes particularly difficult to manage where external finance is involved; it is difficult to reconcile this with conventional spending programmes which have prescribed physical and financial targets. This indicates the need for greater flexibility to accommodate such growth in demand.

Stimulating demand by active promotion

In parts of South Asia, one of the problems is that people do not necessarily perceive sanitation to be a priority. The approach adopted in this manual for developing the Local Action Plan is very much ‘demand led’; in other words, we are responding to what people want and not telling them what they should have. However, if the objectives of an urban upgrading programme involve improvements to health and environmental conditions, whether it brings

direct funding of improvement works or not, then sanitation is a key component. If it is omitted because there is no obvious 'user demand', then at least some of the objectives and benefits of the upgrading programme will not be achieved.

It has also been found that just providing latrines for people does not necessarily work; people must use them, keep them clean and well-maintained and develop improved hygiene behaviour practices if the benefits are to be fully realised. Therefore we need to adopt a different approach whose purpose is to **promote the importance of sanitation**. This means that we need to develop methods which explain and convince people of the importance of sanitation, and hence of acquiring and maintaining a latrine. The methods currently being developed are called social marketing techniques; these focus on the user in a way which is similar to the way commercial organisations try to get consumers to buy their goods and products. There are several important implications of adopting a promotional approach in order to stimulate demand for sanitation (or other services):

- there is a long and unpredictable lead time involved in developing activities and seeing success materialise;
- similarly, because the approach aims to generate demand, it is not possible to specify how many latrines will exist on the ground after a fixed period of time; this obviously is totally dependent on the success of the promotional activities.

A detailed discussion of social marketing for hygiene and sanitation promotion is beyond the scope of this manual. For more details please refer to the DFID Guidance Manual on Water Supply and Sanitation Programmes (WELL 1998): Section 2.3 *Health Aspects* and Section 2.8 *A Social Marketing Approach to Hygiene Promotion and Sanitation Promotion*

References

WELL, (1998) *Guidance Manual on Water Supply and Sanitation Programmes*

Tool 8 Gender issues

How this tool will help you

Gender is a ‘cross cutting’ issue; this means that it has to be considered at all stages of the planning process and is not something that can be dealt with on a discrete basis and ‘ticked off’ as a specific activity. This tool gives examples of issues related to services which are likely to be particularly important for women. However, it very important not just to treat gender through a ‘check-list approach’; field teams must be sensitive to the fact that men and women have different priorities and needs which need to be picked up during discussions and meetings.

See also Tool 2 Participatory information gathering.

Using this tool

Table T8.1 presents some of the key points in relation to the various technical options which have a particular gender dimension and which should be taken into account. This relates to the central role which women play in accessing and providing different services for their families. It should also include specific features in the design and specification which may deviate from standard engineering details if necessary.

Table 8.1. Possible gender-related issues by sector	
Sector	Possible gender-related issues
Water Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ design features of communal supply points and bathing enclosures to ensure privacy ■ walking distance to supply points and bathing enclosures
Sanitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ need for separate male/female cubicles for shared latrines ■ location of shared latrines ■ superstructure details: ventilation, lighting, door details
Drainage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ sullage drain connections

Table 8.1. (continued)	
Sector	Possible gender-related issues
Flood protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ extent of flood protection works to minimise domestic disruption due to flooding
Access and paving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ location of all-weather paved areas as these are used for a wide variety of household and income generating activities
Security lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ location of lanterns to improve personal safety and encourage use of facilities such as latrines and community buildings outside daylight hours
Power supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ individual household issue
Solid waste management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ women are the managers of household waste, involved in resale and reuse activities, carrying waste to bins, and the employment of local sweepers
Community buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ space available appropriate for important activities such as health clinics, pre-school groups, and income generating activities

For further information and guidance on gender issues, please refer to the DFID *Guidance Manual on Water Supply and Sanitation Programmes* (WELL 1998): Section 2.2 *Social Development Perspectives*; sub section 2.2.4 contains more specific details.

References

WELL, (1998) *Guidance Manual on Water Supply and Sanitation Programmes*

Tool 9 Formation of user groups

How this tool will help you

This tool will help you to carry out the following activities in the Framework for local action planning (see Table 3a.1, Section 3a):

- discuss operation & maintenance requirements;
- assess users priorities and demand; and
- reassess users priorities and demand.

User groups are clearly central to the successful operation of the services after implementation. This tool will help you to define the user groups for services; it goes through some of the problems of dealing with communal services and provides a checklist of factors to consider for each service sector.

Using this tool

In your discussions with the service users, it is essential to establish which households will use which facilities; this is described in the section *Why we need user groups*. This is yet another complex issue, but you will find that it begins to emerge as a result of your work with the users concerning the assessment of priorities and demand, and about O&M requirements. Use the checklist of issues in Table T9.1 to help you to take account of the most important problems which may arise in each service sector.

Why we need user groups

For services which are provided to individual households, the responsibility for operation, maintenance, and general care of the facilities rests with the household concerned. This is much less clear for facilities such as public standposts, ‘communal’ latrines, and communal waste bins. Theoretically they belong to everybody in ‘the community’, but the reality is usually that they belong to nobody; there is no real sense of ownership, they are not looked after, maintenance is very poor, and they can rapidly fall into disrepair.

Nevertheless, it is simply not practical for everyone to have individual household services; some facilities will need to be provided on a communal basis.

The most important point here is that a group of users for any facility can be clearly identified. We can think of facilities being *shared*, implying a restricted number of users, rather than *communal*, which in practice has come to mean use by everybody.

Working with a clearly defined user group from the outset can help in the following ways:

- increasing the chances of cost recovery, because the user group is responsible for at least the costs of operating and maintaining the facility;
- promoting a sense ownership and greater care of the facility; and
- increasing the chances of the users carrying out cleaning and minor repairs.

This idea of shared facilities has a very important implication in relation to *demand*. The number and location of, for example, shared water supply points is determined through the identification of clear user groups. User groups do not have to be a standard size. They can come together on the basis of living close together, or on ties of kinship (which may be important for shared latrines). There may be existing neighbourhood groups of one sort or another which can also form the basis for user groups. This is completely different from the traditional approach of following standards and norms such as 200 users per tap and a maximum walking distance of 150 metres regardless of the views of the users. We may have more taps than specified by traditional norms.

Table T9.1 considers some issues in relation to user groups by sector which you can explore in discussions. Care needs to be taken here; small lanes and housing clusters are apparently obvious ways to define user groups, but there are cases where the social interactions between households make it complex. Establishing user groups for shared latrines can be particularly sensitive in this respect.

User groups will need strengthening; this is an area where local NGOs may be able to provide essential support.

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Table T9.1. User group issues by sector

Sector	User group issues
Water Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ location of handpumps and/or standposts, bathing enclosures, washing aprons
Sanitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ shared latrines
Drainage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ needs to be considered as a part of the total drainage system for the site and integrated with the surrounding area; there is rarely scope for more individual choices
Flood protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ some groups on the margins may be amongst the poorest who are particularly vulnerable; take care that they are not neglected
Access and paving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ affects the immediate environment of the plot, and therefore tends to group neighbours in particular streets, lanes and clusters
Security lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ location
Power supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ individual household issue
Solid waste management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ location of shared waste bins
Community buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ this is a wider issue which will affect the whole of the community in question

Tool 10 Cost recovery

How this tool will help you

This tool will help you to carry out the activities *Review costs* and *Cost recovery* in the Framework for local action planning (see Table 3a.1 in Section 3a).

We have already explored how much people are willing to pay (see Tool 7 *User demand for service improvements*). Cost recovery is about how to get contributions in money or in kind from service users to cover the O&M costs and some of the capital costs where appropriate. This tool provides a checklist of key questions about the mechanics of cost recovery.

Using this tool

So far, in your discussions with the users, you have focused on what their priorities are in relation to the costs of different service options. The outcome of this is likely to be a reasonably clear idea of what improvements they want and how they are to be financed; that is, who is paying for what. Use the checklist below to explore in more detail with the users how costs can be recovered and the money collected.

Cost recovery

Recovering some or all of the costs of service provision is necessary if the services are to be sustainable in the long term. Rather than consider cost recovery by sector, it is more appropriate to discuss this with the users by looking at the way in which services are delivered and the possible ways in which costs can be recovered.

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Table T10.1. Issues to discuss about cost recovery

Users	Comments
Individual service connections	Paid for by the household concerned; there are standard charges for the connection, and monthly tariffs to be paid. These are based on either meter readings or are flat rate charges. The householder will normally pay the bills direct to the agency supplying the service.
Shared services	<p>These present real difficulties. O&M costs need to be recovered, but the amount of capital cost to be recovered depends on the approach the programme adopted to financing. (See the section on Who pays for what? in Tool 7 User demand for service improvements). Possibilities are as follows.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The municipality or utility levies a charge for the facility such as the water supply point to cover the cost of delivering water and undertaking repair and maintenance; the difficulty here is that the municipality is not dealing with an individual, but a user group which is a 'collective' organisation. ■ The user group collects money to fund minor repairs if the municipality or utility will not undertake repair and maintenance. In this case, the likely cost per month to each user group of operating and maintaining the supply point needs to be estimated. These costs can be surprisingly small; the problem is to motivate and mobilise user groups.

If user groups are established and become the mechanism for collecting the payments for the costs incurred, you can use the checklist in Table T10.2 to explore how this might be done.

Table T10.2. Checklist for the mechanics of cost recovery

Issue	Finding
How is the money to be collected?	
Where is it to be kept?	
To whom is it paid?	