



## Gender and participation

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A MAJOR CHALLENGE for clients is understanding what constitutes gender, participation and mechanisms of implementation in order to ensure effective project performance that leads to people's improved standards of living. For many people, men as well as women who work in the water sector, gender is still synonymous with only women's participation. Little attention is therefore accorded to the respective work, responsibilities, benefits and controls divided between women and men in different socio-economic and cultural categories.

The major reason why gender is not sufficiently addressed, despite such understanding and recognition, is that sector professionals and policy makers lack know-how to embed gender and equity practices as an integral dimension of design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes. This has become one of the major stamping blocks to gender mainstreaming.

Gender Participation is the process of assessing the "...implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women and men's concerns an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres, so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated" (UN-Ecosoc 1997)

Participatory methodologies evolved over the past decade have focused more on the inclusion of not only men and women, but also taking into account the elderly, different ethnic groups, and the poorest strata of communities. The objective of these participatory methodologies within the water supply and sanitation (WSS) sector is to enable all community members to be informed and involved in the decision making process of establishing, maintaining and eventually extending and renewing a WSS system.

The challenge for our clients however is to integrate participatory approaches at every step of such a process and to have the local capacity to develop such a process in the framework of their programs.

### Background

The Working Group on Gender Participation of the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council in partner-

ship with the Water and Sanitation Program and the International Research Center (IRC), initiated a Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) Initiative. The main objective of Phase 1 of PLA was to advance gender in the water and sanitation (WSS) sector. As an initial step PLA sought to assess whether there are any linkages between gender, participation, poverty and demand responsive approaches (DRA) and project performance or sustainability<sup>2</sup>

To test this, PLA launched the global gender assessments in three continents of Latin America, Asia and Africa. In Latin America assessments were carried out in Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia and Columbia. Other assessments were undertaken in East Asia (Indonesia and Philippines), South Asia (India, Sri-Lanka and Nepal), West Africa (Cameroon and Ghana) and East and Southern Africa (Kenya, Malawi, South Africa and Zambia). A Methodology for Participatory Assessments (MPA), focusing on sustainability, poverty and participatory indicators was developed and tested during the assessments.

PLA came at a time when the ESA region was preparing to hold a regional gender workshop in Pretoria South Africa. UNESCO, UNICEF and WSP-ESA organized the ESA workshop in November 1997 in collaboration with the Water Research Commission in South Africa. The workshop brought together 17 African countries, which agreed to integrate the gender assessments in their regional work plans, with the assessments becoming a priority. Among its conclusions, the workshop recommended the four countries to participate in the PLA assessments. The assessments were conducted in 19 communities in the four countries in the ESA region.

The expectation was that lessons learned from the assessments would contribute to developing operational guidelines and participatory tools for gender mainstreaming and policy formulation, as well as monitoring and evaluation.

### Assessment outcomes

The initial phase of the PLA gender assessments confirmed the importance of gender participation in WSS programs. Two main products that have come out are the assessment reports and the methodology for participatory assessments. The study produced an interesting innovative approach - Methodology for Participatory Assessments, on

**Table 1. Gender methodology for participatory assessments**

<b>Key indicators for the assessments in water supply and sanitation services</b>		
<b>Variable</b>	<b>Indicators and sub- indicators</b>	<b>Source of information</b>
A. Effectively sustained	Functioning System <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Level of quality of the works (degree to which they are suited to operation)</li> <li>Service operation in terms of water quantity, quality and supply reliability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technical team members</li> <li>Local records, operators and service administrators</li> <li>Users (M/F, R/P<sup>1</sup>)</li> </ul>
	Effective Financing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coverage of investment and/or recurrent costs</li> <li>Universality and timeliness of payments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Socio-Economic Team Members</li> <li>Local records</li> <li>Users (M/F, R/P)</li> </ul>
	Effective Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Level and timeliness of repairs</li> <li>Budgeting and accounting for service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local records, service administrators, operator, mechanic etc</li> <li>Users (M/F, R/P)</li> </ul>
B. Effective use	Hygienic Use by All <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proportion and nature of population using the service</li> <li>Degree of improvement of family water use habits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Users (M/F, R/P)</li> </ul>
C. Demand-responsive service	Meeting User Demands <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Range of service characteristics users contribute to, for M/F, R/P</li> <li>Achieved balance of user-perceived cost-benefit for M/F, R/P</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Users (M/F, R/P)</li> </ul>
D. Division of burdens and benefits	Economic Participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Division of skilled/unskilled and paid/unpaid labor between M/F, R/P</li> <li>Cost sharing/contributions sharing between and within households</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Users (M/F, R/P)</li> <li>Local service administrators and workers (M/F)</li> </ul>
	Management Participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Function holding and decision-making by M/F, R/P</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local service administrators (M/F)</li> </ul>
E. Participation in service establishment	User voice and choice in planning and design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Degree of informed decision making by M/F, R/P on: service initiation; choice of technologies and service levels; location of facilities; choice of local service management organization; type and size of contributions to service exploitation; and choice of local maintenance system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local service administrators (M/F) at the time of establishment of the service</li> <li>Users (M/F)</li> </ul>
	User contributions to service establishment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Type and proportion of contribution by M/F, R/P</li> <li>Local monitoring and control, specifying M/F, R/P</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local records</li> <li>Local service administrators (M/F) at the time of establishment of the service</li> <li>Users (M/F, R/P)</li> </ul>
	Management capacity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Type of management skills created among M/F, R/P</li> <li>Composition, status and areas and tools of control of managing committee, as present and known to M/F, R/P</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local records</li> <li>Local service administrators (M/F) at the time of establishment of the service</li> <li>Users (M/F, R/P)</li> </ul>
F. Institutional support for gender and demand-responsive participation	Enabling Organizational System <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indicative policy as reflected in service objectives, implementation approaches and project performance criteria</li> <li>Sex and class disaggregated planning and monitoring systems in operation</li> <li>Required project expertise reflected in type of project agencies, field teams and team approach</li> <li>Extent and nature of staff training available for new approaches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project documents</li> <li>Staff (M/F)</li> <li>Manager (M/F) in charge of project at the time of implementation</li> </ul>
G. Policy support for gender and demand-responsive participation	Supportive Organizational Climate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding and incentives for demand-responsive and gender and class sensitive participatory approaches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff (M/F) and</li> <li>Manager (M/F) at time of implementation</li> </ul>
	Supportive Sector Policy and Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National, sector policy for water and sanitation present with sustainable services and equity as explicit goals</li> <li>Degree to which national sector strategies area present to guide the achievement of the policy goals and lay down community participation and management; gender sensitivity and gender equity; and demand-responsiveness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy documents</li> <li>Project documents(<b>Footnotes</b>)</li> </ul>

how to conduct gender assessments and design and implement projects which address gender and poverty concerns.

### **Methodology for participatory assessments (MPA)**

The Methodology for Participatory Assessments (MPA) was developed and tested to address gender and poverty concerns in project design, implementation and monitoring of WSS Programs. MPA therefore offers tools and techniques that enable implementation of gender-participation and assessment of benefits accrued. The MPA strives to propose a fully participatory approach, which promotes gender, poverty concerns and participation. The methodology facilitates Policy and Institutional analysis of gender, poverty and participation; design and implementation of gender sensitive programs and monitoring and evaluation of socio-economic and health benefits for the respective community members.

The MPA facilitates women and men in communities, and project staff, to assess their water supply and sanitation services and the establishment process, with the use of participatory methods and tools. The MPA draws upon the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and the SARAR (Self-esteem, Associative strengths, Resourcefulness, Action Planning and Responsibility) tools and methods that have proven their effectiveness in involving communities over the years. It adds important new features:

- The MPA framework (to be presented at the conference) consists of a set of indicators, seeking to link sustainability with gender, poverty concerns, participation and demand response approaches.
- The methods include participatory research instruments such as participatory tools; semi structured questionnaires, focused group discussions, interviews and direct observation. These methods are applied systematically and compliment one another in gathering both qualitative and quantitative data.
- The qualitative information, generated visually at community level lends itself to easy conversion to both numerical processes and graphic representations.
- Community level graphics are produced immediately following applications of participatory tools with community groups, allowing for presentation and verification of results with the rest of the community, decision-making and action planning.
- Consolidation of the same information across time and many communities helps project implementers and managers see trends and analyze causes.

### **Way forward**

WSP-AF will continue to play a facilitation role and foster exchange of experiences in the region. This will be done in partnership with the IRC, UNESCO, UNICEF, WHO, the Institute of Water and Sanitation Development (IWSD), the Network for Water and Sanitation Development International (NETWAS), TREND, CREPA and the PHAST-ASN. The partnership will also develop implementation guidelines, support in country training and country action plans developed by the 17 African countries that were represented in Pretoria.

The Water and Sanitation Program Africa Region (WSP-AF) and the International Research Center (IRC) are holding a Regional Methodology for Participatory Assessments (MPA) Workshop in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania from October 11-25, 2001. This is the first of two meetings planned for Africa in rolling out the MPA in 2001 and 2002.

### **Objectives of the regional workshop**

- (a) To carry out capacity building and training for sector professionals, resource centers and organizations
- (b) To disseminate the findings from the gender global and regional assessments and develop a strategy on the way forward

### **Expected outcomes/outputs of the workshop**

- (i) Policy makers sensitized and endorse the application of the MPA
- (ii) A pool of skilled resource trainers responsible for organizing further capacity building for sector programs in-country and/or in the region.
- (iii) One-year country strategy and action plans on how, when and where the MPA is to be applied and how this will be monitored.

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Council (1997)

<sup>2</sup> The initiative is based on the premise that the more Demand Responsive (DRA) a project is, the more voice and choice people have in development and the greater the likelihood of project sustainability.

<sup>3</sup> Male/Female Rich/Poor

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