

MAXIMIZING THE BENEFITS FROM WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION

Water and Sanitation for all: practical ways to improve accessibility for disabled people

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DISABLED people are among the poorest and most socially excluded groups in every society; they are also among the hardest to reach, and usually the least served by basic services, such as water and sanitation. Improving accessibility and inclusion brings benefits for the whole family and wider community, and does not have to be hi-tech or costly.



Figure 1. Hanging latrine, commonly seen in Bangladesh (photo: BPKS)



Figure 2. Family pit latrine in a rural area of Bangladesh (photo: BPKS)

Obstacles to accessibility and inclusion include:

- Obstacles in the natural environment,
- Obstacles in the built environment, e.g. poorly constructed facilities (Figures 1 & 2, in this paper, and Figures 1-3 in the paper by Charles Menya and Chadwick Safu),
- Institutional issues – lack of policies, information, understanding, skills and experience, and
- Social and cultural factors – prejudice, incorrect beliefs, negative behaviour, overprotection, etc.

The following presentations describe a variety of practical approaches that have been used to address these obstacles, and illustrate their effectiveness in enabling disabled children and adults to access mainstream facilities.

1. Accessible handpumps and sanitary latrines in Bangladesh

Incorporating accessibility into the design and construction of water and sanitation facilities from the outset.
MD Hannan, BPKS, Bangladesh.

2. Inclusive Education facilities in Kenya

Upgrading and adapting the built environment, including toilets, illustrated here in a school, to improve access for all, including children with disabilities.
Charles Menya, Chadwick Safu, Leonard Cheshire International, Kenya.

3. Low-cost assistive devices for access to water and sanitation

Designing individual assistive devices for disabled children and adults to access water and sanitation.
Elijah Musenyente, HITS, Uganda.

4. Disability and attitudes in developing countries

Addressing social attitudes and behaviour among service providers.

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