
SOCIAL FACTORS ON WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION

Introduction**12.1 Socio-Economic aspects of WSS**

The socio-economic factors of an area, a community or the country as a whole are considered very much essential elements in planning and designing the development projects. Development efforts obviously target a section of people; a particular community or area based masses. It is, therefore, an urgent issue to know the clientele's socio-economic status, need of the clienteles, demands of them, their absorptive capacity, the gender issues involved and the potential adverse impact on vulnerable groups. If these factors are known to the planners, decision-makers and project designers, it becomes easier to set the project goal, target and strategic approaches.

12.2 Socio-Economy of rural and urban Bangladesh

With an area of only 144000 sq.kms: and a population of 130 million, Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated countries of the world (WB, 1997). In this semitropical, predominantly rural country about 48% of rural and 44% of the urban population live below the poverty line, a reduction by almost half from 15 years ago (BBS 1993). Per capita Gross National Product in 1993 was US\$220 (WB, 1993). Household spend 59% of their income on food, and 60% of children below 5 years of age are malnourished (WB). The country ranked 147 out of 173 countries in the world as per UNDP human development index.

The annual growth of the Gross National Product in the 1980 - 1991 period exceeded the population growth rate and averaged 4.3%, an increase from 2.3% in the previous decade (WB, 1993). While agricultural production averaged 2.6% growth annually during that period, its share shrank from 55% to 36% of GDP, while industry grew from 9% to 16% and services from 37% to 48% (WB, 1993).

12.3 Demographic characteristics

The population in 1996 was approximately 111 million, and expected to grow to 131 million by the year 2000. Already an estimate shows that it has further increased to 121.8 million of which 62.4 million male and 59.4 million female (estimated as on January 1996). The overall growth rate has dropped from 2.7% in 1970 - 1980 to 2.2% between 1980 - 1991 and 1.84% (estimated as on

participation of community people in every steps of management i.e., planning, implementation, operation and maintenance of the project.

12.9.1 Community participation in WSS

People participation in decision making and local ownership results in effective and sustainable development process. This belief has played a central part in the shift in institutional strategies from supply-driven to demand-driven approaches, which response to the felt needs and aspirations of users, especially the poor. However, quantitative evidence of the efficacy of participation in determining project effectiveness, relative to other factors, has been missing.

In most developing countries, public sector agencies provide rural infrastructure. Poor public sector performance has led to a widespread search for institutional alternatives and means to increase the accountability of the public sector. In the rural water sub-sector, the search has been for strategies to increase users' "exit" and "voice" options and to restructure the sector so that suppliers have incentives to match the demand of users.

The problematic issue therefore is not technology and construction but rules and regulations-institutions and organization. The first challenge for agencies is to create an incentive for staff to work in partnership with hundreds of communities. The second task for agencies staff is to enable communities to make informed choices, and manage and choose from a menu of water supply options (technology and management) that the agency offers.

Although the agency task has changed dramatically over the years, that fact has seldom been recognized or acknowledged by the agencies themselves. Hence, the agencies and their competency, organizations, structure, and management-by-blueprint style have remained largely the same. The mismatch between the task and the mandate, ability and competence of the agency has resulted in many successful government attempts to induce participation. The key question, then, is: How can organizations change to induce participation in collective action?

Beneficiary participation can be brought about in several ways: directly, through participation, in decision making; indirectly, through leaders; or through representation on committees or boards. Participation of beneficiaries can be facilitated through extension workers, local government units, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the private sector. Many factors influence beneficiary participation, including the immediate and broader policy context; client characteristics (including felt need); and agency characteristics, such as flexibility, responsiveness to client, and willingness

to invest in the sound organization of communities. In this regard, the following questions are to be addressed:

- Does people's participation contribute to project effectiveness?
- How important is this contribution, relative to other factors?
- What factors and strategies influence participation in collective action?
- What are the lessons for the design of large-scale project?
- What are the implications for policy reform?

12.9.2 What is participation?

Participation is a process through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives and the decision and resources, which affect them. Participation is also a voluntary process by which people, include the disadvantaged (in income, gender, ethnicity, or education), influence or control the decisions that affect them. The essence of participation is exercising voice and choice.

~~Definitions of participation about (Cohen and Uphoff 1977, Korten 1980; Paul 1987; and Ghai and Hewit de Alacantara 1990).~~ All of them include in some measure the notions of contributing, influencing, sharing, or redistributing power and of control, resources, benefits, knowledge, and skills to be gained through beneficiary involvement in decision making. There is also many debates among participations and in the literature about whether participation is a means or an end, or both (World Bank 1992; Picciotto 1992).

12.9.3 Defining community participation

How community participation is defined will depend upon on the objectives and the needs and possibilities for participation. No matter whether a maximum or minimum community involvement is developed, some central questions will have to be answered and tested in the field; who participates in which phases and decisions, how and to what degree, and what effects are desired for the programme and the community. These questions are not yet generally considered by the agencies solely responsible for the planning and implementation of water supply and sanitation programmes.

Some of the international organizations have taken the working definition of community participation from three dimensions. These are involvement of all those affected in *decision making* about what should be done and how; Mass contribution to the development effort, i.e. to the *implementation* of the decision; and sharing in the *benefits* of the programmes (WB, 1976). Since equitable share of benefits is essential, community participation can be defined by *involvement of*

the local population activity in the decision-making concerning development projects or in their implementation.

Involvement of population in the physical works of implementation of project is also sometimes treated as participation. This kind of involvement prescribed passive acceptance of services and provision of supports in cash or kind, in giving money for a pump, digging a well for a water supply, or laying bricks for a health center. The dynamics of changing society, however, demand much more than mere acceptance, allegiance, and unpaid labour. The new type of involvement requires *identification with the movement*, which grows only out of *involvement in thinking, planning, deciding*.

This conception does not assume that there is an ideal level of participation varies, but over the long run sustainability will depend on minimizing transaction cost in horizontal and vertical interactions. Participation is viewed as a *means to defined ends, not as an end in it*; the goal therefore is to optimize participation to achieve the desired project goals, not simply to maximize participation. The desired goals in rural water supply projects include achieving improved water supply systems and developing the human, organizational and management capacity to solve problems as they arise in order to sustain the improvements.

The principle underlying participation to give people a voice is constant, yet the choices that people make vary infinitely. Thus a community may decide to subcontract maintenance to an independent mechanic rather than to undergo training and take turns doing the work. A water user' group may choose to dissolve the organization or to define new goals after the first ones have been met. For example, when construction is complete, a water committee may transform itself to undertake sanitation itself to undertake sanitation construction, to build a football field, or to branch into children's education, depending on the community group may divide into smaller, functional sub-groups, with the larger group meeting only occasionally. Alternatively, people may informally nominate leaders to represent their interests.

12.9.4 Necessity of community participation

The reasons that advanced the concept of and necessity of community participation in all the development interventions including WSS are:

The reasons advance for community participation

- (i) With participation, more will be accomplished
- (ii) With participation, services can be provided more chiefly

- (iii) Participation has an intrinsic value for participants
- (iv) Participation is a catalyst for further development
- (v) Participation encourage a sense of responsibility
- (vi) Participation guarantees that a felt need is involved
- (vii) Participation ensures things are done the right way
- (viii) Participation uses valuable indigenous knowledge
- (ix) Participation frees people from dependence on other's skills
- (x) Participation makes people more conscious of the cause of their poverty and what they can do about it.

The form of community Participation

- (i) Consultation
- (ii) A financial contribution by the community
- (iii) Self-help projects by groups of beneficiaries
- (iv) Self-help projects by involving the whole community
- (v) Community specialized workers
- (vi) Mass action
- (vii) Collective commitment to behaviour change
- (viii) Endogenous development
- (ix) Autonomous community projects
- (x) Approaches to self-sufficiency

12.9.5 Level of participation

12.10 Participatory planning

The success and failure of any activities or programs mainly depends on planers. It is the necessity to make plan according to Mission and Vision and the practical situation. The participation of representatives from root or field level to top level is essential for planning. The planning by such type of participation is called the participatory planning. The participatory planning may be shown by a cycle called participatory planning cycle (Figure 12.). This cycle accelerates the trends of woks.

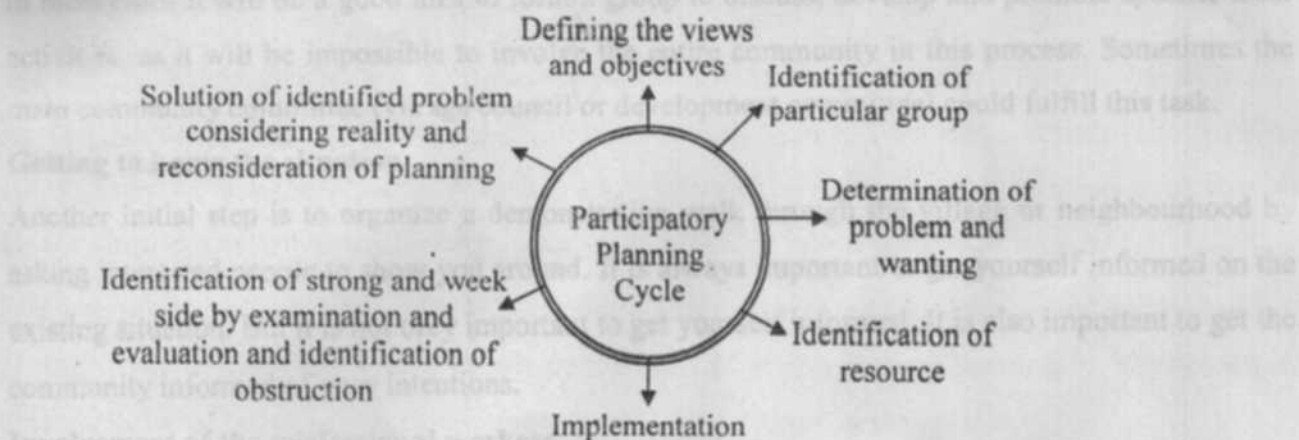


Figure 12.2: Participatory planning cycle

12.11 Community organization

12.12 Community mobilization

Community mobilization involves the creation of social movement for a particular programme by mobilizing many of allies at the national, regional and community level. The aim is to create a demand and activate a wide range of groups, for instance for sanitation improvements. Community mobilization is the glue that binds advocacy activities to more planned and behaviour-oriented communication activities. Steps of community mobilization are as follows:

Contact with local leaders

One of the first steps will be to introduce yourself to the local authorities and /or local leaders. Inform them of your plans and ask for their approval and support. This is not only a matter of good work easier. They can give you a first impression of the community, the various socio-economic groups, problems and needs, possible constraints, and so on. They can tell you what they think of the new project and in what way they are willing and able to contribute. Together you can discuss possible way to improve the community.

Formal meeting

One of the next steps may be to call a formal meeting to inform the entire community of the programme and your plans. The organization of a formal meeting is useful to give general information and to ask for general support. It is however not the right place to discuss things in detail. In general meetings most people will only be listeners as there will neither be the time no chance for everybody to give her/his view.

Formation of committee

In most cases it will be a good idea to form a group to discuss, develop and promote specific local activities, as it will be impossible to involve the entire community in this process. Sometimes the main community committee (village council or development committee) could fulfill this task.

Getting to know the situation

Another initial step is to organize a demonstration walk through the village or neighbourhood by asking interested people to show you around. It is always important to get yourself informed on the existing situation. But it is not only important to get yourself informed. It is also important to get the community informed of your intentions.

Involvement of the professional workers

At the start of community mobilization we should also try to inform and involve other professionals in the area. They can give you information. They may give you input in your programme or you may take part in their activities.

12.13 Sustainable development approach

To achieve their development objectives interventions in water supply and sanitation have to be sustainable. The main thrust of the concept is that activities by the present generation should not compromise the resources, or the environmental conditions of future generations. A water supply or sanitation system is sustainable when it:

- provides an efficient and reliable service at a level which is desired;
- can be financed or co-financed by the users with limited but feasible external support and technical assistance;
- is being used in an efficient and effective way, without negatively affecting the environment.

The definition of sustainability involves four crucial dimensions: the user community wanting an efficient and reliable service, the technology that has to provide it, the institutional environment and efficient use of the service (Figure 12.1). These issues will be briefly described here.

12.14 Gender issues conceptual frame

A gender approach means that the different knowledge, responsibilities, roles, resources, needs and attitudes of men and women are taken into account. A gender approach requires an openmindedness and aims at the fullest possible participation of both women and men. It takes account of wealth, age, ethnic group: rich and poor, young and old. The main feature of a gender approach is that it

focuses on men and women and reviews the needs and possibilities to fully involve both groups in water and sanitation improvements.

The word 'Gender' generally is used about something to mean either male or female. But in social science, gender is used to indicate the difference between male and female in society. Though it is synonymous word but in practical it has a great difference from sex. This is why every body should have a clear conception about the term 'Gender' and 'Sex' in social science.

Sex is the character indicating difference between male and female created by natural and biological means; or, difference of male and female on the basis of physical characteristics; or, physiological characteristics of male and female which is selected by birth and unchangeable.

Gender is the identification of male and female which is socially buildup, socially selected relationship between male and female, socially fixed up role of male and female which is changeable and it differs with society and culture.

The term 'gender' is used to describe a set of qualities and behaviours expected from men and women by their society. These form his or her social identity. Gender expectations arise from the notion that certain qualities, behaviours, characteristics, needs and role are 'natural' for me. It refers to the social construction of female and male identity. It includes the ways in which those differences, whether real or perceived, have been valued, used and relied upon to classify women and men and to assign roles and expectations to them. The significance of this is that the lives and experiences of women and men, including their experience of the legal system, occur within complex sets of differing social and cultural expectations.

Gender refers to the roles and responsibilities of women and men that are created in our families, our societies and our cultures. These roles and expectations are learned. They can change over time and they vary within and between cultures. This concept is vital because it facilitates gender analysis revealing how women's subordination is socially constructed. As such, the subordination can be changed. It is not biologically predetermined nor is it enshrined in granite.

Now the term 'gender' is not confined within male and female. In modern definition it identify the disadvantageous, unprogressed, neglected, suppressed stream of the society. This stream is the issue of gender. It can be men or women, children or young, young or old, etc.

12.15 Women empowerment

Women empowerment is a conflicting and debatable term. Once upon a time, social development planners thought that the absence of direct participation of women in development project is the

main obstacle of social development. Their argument is that women are about 50% of total manpower and these parts are inactive and neglected in society. So they want to give them chance in all steps. They want to utilize them as a worker in development project besides the men. This concept is called the women empowerment. But upto certain period they cannot understand that anyhow every woman is engaged to develop their society with honour and respect.

12.16 Gender auditing

The term audit means the check, examination, assessment, etc. about anything. Gender auditing was basically the examination or assessment of involvement or scope of participation of male and female in any activity. But at present the concept of male and female has been changed by neglected or disadvantageous stream of the community or society in gender issue. So, for the case of gender auditing, it is the auditing of involvement or participation or scope of participation of neglected or disadvantageous stream and advantageous or influential stream of community or society in any activity.

Gender auditing may be performed in any stage of the project by questioner survey. There are some indicators must have by which auditing can be performed. Here some questions are mentioned as for example for auditing gender (considering male and female) in any organization:

Key questions

- What is the ratio of male and female staff at all levels of your organization?
- What are the procedures for the selection of staff? How do they encourage/discourage men or women?
- What are the recruitment procedures for various categories of staff? How do they encourage/discourage men or women?
- What are the criteria used and procedures following for posting? How do they encourage/discourage men or women from joining the service?
- What are the criteria and the procedures followed for the transfer of staff? How do they affect women? How do they affect men? What are the differences? What are their causes? What are the consequences (eg. Staff drop-outs)?
- What are the criteria and processes followed for the training of staff?
- How do they affect men and women? What is the present ratio of staff receiving training (men/women; in-service/outside)
- What are the criteria and procedures being used for promotions? How do they differentially affect women and men? What are the male/female ratios in some of the recent promotions?

For each of the above points identify or suggest ways in which the negative impact on men or women could be remedied.

12.17 Gender balance and sensitivity

Gender balance is the minimization of difference in involvement of people of different status of society in any activity. Here qualification, capacity, capability, eligibility must be considered and judged without any external influence for their involvement and participation. The balancing of gender is the great sensitive issue for development of society.