

## **BRAC Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Programme**

### **Guidelines on**

# **Village WASH Committee**

**August 2006**



BRAC Health Programme  
BRAC Centre, 75 Mohakhali  
Dhaka 1212  
Website: [www.brac.net](http://www.brac.net)

## Village Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Committee

United Nations has eight Millennium Development Goals. Two of which are (1) reduce mortality rate among child under five, and (2) ensure environmental sustainability. These two goals are directly linked with access to safe water and sanitation. All other countries including Bangladesh have agreed on this issue. Safe water and sanitation were also given importance at the world conference on "Sustainable Development" held in Johannesburg in 2002. The Government of Bangladesh has made a commitment to ensure 100% sanitation by the year 2010 pertaining to the international commitment on sanitation.

In this context, BRAC has taken special initiatives to strengthen its existing programs and undertaken a comprehensive program on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH). To achieve the target of WASH program, people's participation at all level is crucial. There were individual/several committees or task forces to implement safe water and sanitation program, but there is no institutional infrastructure at the village level to accomplish such program. It is necessary to establish such infrastructure to carry out safe water and sanitation program in villages. This guideline has been developed to build WASH institution in every village.

### **Goal and Purpose of the Committee:**

**Goal:** Developing an organizational infrastructure to ensure sustainable development for WASH program through active involvement of rural people at all levels.

**Purpose:** Changing people's perception in hygiene practice, usage of safe water and sanitation by incorporating rural people in all development activities.

- Develop specific work plan at village level to improve water and sanitation situation.
- Create a revolving fund to provide assistance to hardcore poor and poor families in order to ensure safe water and sanitation.
- Progression of actions by regular monitoring.
- Formation of sustainable grassroots institution by forming village committee to accomplish desirable results.

### **Expectation:**

The village WASH committee can initiate the following steps to execute the activities:

- Identify problem by implementing pragmatic measures and resolve it by incorporating existing resources
- Mobilize local resources to assist the local poor and hardcore poor people.
- Undertake actions considering the significance of public health to develop human resource.

- Establish sanitary latrine in every household and substantiate its usage.
- Repair, maintain and proper utilize of safe water technology.
- Hand over responsibilities to the village committee for further improvement after certain time of implementation of activities is passed.

### Formation of Committee:

**Formation of Committee:** The formation of VWC will be initiated by building a social and professional rapport with villagers. That is why it is very important to communicate with everyone irrespective of social classes. Perhaps the committee can be formed in association with ward member and women member of the Union Parishad.

**Structure of Committee:** There will be 11 members in the committee selected from different segments of the community such as local elites/leaders, School/Madrasha teachers, adolescent girls, women VDP members, micro-credit borrower, representative of hardcore poor etc.

The committee will be consisted of 6 women and 5 men in total. For instance:

Local elites/community leaders (Teachers preferred)	1 person	Chairperson
Representative from primary/secondary/madrasha teachers	1 person	Member
Imam/Religious leader	1 person	Member
Village Doctor/small business community leader	1 person	Member
Local NGO/CBO (club/committee) representative	1 person	Member
VDP (woman) member/representative	1 person	Member
Adolescent girls representative	1 person	Member
Shastho Sebika	1 person	Member
Hardcore poor/VGD cardholder (woman)	1 person	Member
Palli Samaj (village society)/BRAC VO representative	1 person	Treasurer
Youth (woman) representative	1 person	Member Secretary

It may be noted that the respective ward members (both male and female) and BRAC WASH staff will act as advisor to the committee.

## Rules of Committee formation

- A representative of BRAC-organized Palli Samaj must be included in the committee. In case of absence of Palli Samaj, Village Organization member may be co-opted.
- There will not be a separate WASH committee in Specially Targeted Ultra Poor (STUP) areas. The program will be implemented in close coordination with the existing **Gram Daridro Bimochon Committee** (village poverty alleviation committee) - GDBC under STUP. The respective Sastho Sebika and other members may be incorporated in GDBC.
- The WASH committee will also undertake its activities in close coordination with water management committee where **Piped Water Supply Scheme** is in operation.
- In case of selecting a teacher as the Chairperson, the representative of local elites/community leaders may be selected as a member instead of another teacher's representative.
- In absence of compatible teacher, a potential person from local elites segment, who is well accepted by all, shall be selected as the Chairperson.
- In absence of any member according to the committee structure, more than one person from same profession/segment may be selected if agreed by all to fill the 11-member committee. However, there will always be 6 women representatives.
- In view to avoid conflict, past or present UP chairman/member, or person will run for election in future or person directly involve with any partisan politics shall not be included in the committee.

**Orientation of Committee Members:** An orientation session should be organized within 15 days of committee formation with full consent of the members. Responsibilities and duties of members should be described explicitly. The advisor and members should participate in preparing annual work plan.

**Committee Meeting:** After the formation of committee, members will participate in monthly meeting on a particular date for the first six months to scrutinize the past month activities and prepare the work plan for the upcoming month. After the first six month, meeting can be arranged in every two to three months with the consensus of the members.

**Span of the Committee:** Committee should be remained at least for two years. Every year a general meeting should be held. In the annual general meeting, their activities and progress report should be presented to the villagers. In addition, the work plan for next year will be discussed and finalized in consultation with the community.

**Restoration of the Committee:** Committee can be restructured with the consent of the members if a member is absent in three consecutive meetings without any reason, or incapable of performing committee activities, or a death occurs or a member becomes disabled.

## Activities of the Committee:

To improve the safe water and sanitation situation and public health in a particular village, WASH program will play an integral part by taking following steps:

- **Raise Health Awareness:** Create awareness among villagers about health and hygiene by frequent visit and having dialogue with the members of households, mosque/other religious, social and educational institutions.
- **Public Health Development:** Necessary steps should be taken to ensure use of safe water and hygienic latrines by every family within a particular time.
- **School Sanitation and Hygiene Education:** Make students aware of WASH program and bolster the proper use of tube well and latrine in the premises.
- **Mitigation of Arsenic Problem:** Test or re-test the existing tube well water as well as the newly installed ones to determine arsenic problem. Alternative measure can also be taken to ensure mitigation of arsenic problem.
- **Safe Waste Disposal:** Encourage villager to dispose household perishable waste, tube well wastewater and other solid and grey water waste safely. Encourage them to clean and manage waste in pond, ditch and/or canal.
- **Fund Raising:** Raising fund to help the hardcore poor.
- **Repair and Maintenance:** Determination of proper monitoring, repair, and maintenance of local resources i.e. latrines, tube well and so on.
- **Monitoring:** Monitor the established tube well, latrine as well as WATSAN hardware and other materials and determine sustainability.

## Procedures of Committee Activities:

- Committee will decide the date, time and location of their first meeting during the day of orientation. However, preference will be given to female members to select time and place.
- Discussed matters and decision should be kept on a register book. Committee Member-Secretary will perform this responsibility with the help of BRAC employee.
- In every meeting, the resolution of the previous meeting has to be approved by members.
- Responsibilities will be given to members by mutual discussion in the first meeting.
- Committee will declare about the time and place of next meeting in the current meeting.
- If any conflict rises, the committee will handle the matters wisely and resolve the issue by discussion.

- One-third of the member has to be present to run the meeting. If for any reason corum is not accomplished, the meeting should be postponed and another date should be announced.
- If necessary, a saving account may be opened in a local commercial bank to deposit the collected money.

### **Responsibilities and Duties of the Committee:**

As a member of the committee one has to carry out the following:

- **Chairperson:** As the head of the committee, the chairperson will preside the monthly and special meeting as well as lead the committee in making decisions.
- **Member Secretary:** The Member Secretary will call and arrange the meeting. She will prepare agendas and maintain meeting resolutions. She will maintain professional liaison with Union Parishad members and other significant person of the society and will accomplish her responsibilities.
- **Treasurer:** Treasurer will administer the committee fund. She will present the expenditure and statement of the account in the meeting.
- **Member:** Members will play a direct role in achieving the goal of the committee. Besides that they will also follow up the ongoing activities regularly.

### **Responsibilities and Duties of a Committee Member:**

- Implement yearly/half-yearly work plan for village and community.
- Identify the possible sources to collect the fund.
- Organize committee meeting regularly.
- Review the progress of the activities and take necessary steps to achieve the goal. If required, consult with the potential members of the community.
- Take necessary steps to ensure the use of safe water and sanitation by every family in the village.
- Encourage and ensure the participation of women and poor people in decision-making.
- Keep liaison with Union Parishad members and union WATSAN committee.
- Take one time donation/contribution/grant, seasonal paddy or crops from the solvent and affluent villagers.

- Make arrangement to establish sanitary latrine and install tube well and if possible repair the tube well for free of cost or at an affordable cost for the hardcore poor.
- Facilitate UP to allocate fund for the hardcore poor from the UP Annual Development Fund (ADP) for sanitation.
- Ensure regular supervision, renovation and maintenance of local resources such as latrines, tube well etc.
- Assist in arranging health forum, folk song, public act, film show and video show to raise awareness in order to change people's hygiene practices.
- Bring the student together in implementing school sanitation and hygiene education.
- Observe Sanitation Month in close coordination and collaboration with union WATSAN committee.
- Involve village doctor, health worker and social worker in the activities.
- Test or re-test the water quality of the existing tube well as well as newly installed tube well.
- Refer patient to government facilities to ensure treatment for arsenicosis.
- Ensure the safe disposal of household perishable waste/kitchen waste by digging hole.
- Ensure the safe disposal of household wastewater and tube well wastewater.
- Encourage people to fill out the hole containing household and latrine waste with soil and dig a new hole for future use.
- Keep the surroundings clean.
- Take initiative to clean other waste such as unclean water and waste in pond, ditch, canal etc.
- Ensure the concrete foundation of the tube well.
- Form separate monitoring team consisting of students and women to identify the gaps and assess the needs of the community.
- Follow up the activities of the monitoring team.