

Developing National Guidelines on WASH for Persons with Disabilities and Older People



This document describes the key steps and learning from developing Inclusive WASH Guidelines in Cambodia over the past two years. It is intended for NGOs and government at local, regional and international level wanting to understand more about how to generate guidelines, and to lead action learning on inclusive WASH.

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Summary of Developing National Guidelines Process:

From National Inclusive WASH Guidelines Development Experience



Introduction

According to 2015 Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey (DHS),¹ 10% of household members aged 5 years and over experience at least one type of disability. The 2008 census showed 6.34% of Cambodians were aged over 60 years. This population is increasing and is expected to nearly triple in the coming decades.² Many persons with disabilities and older people face significant barriers in their daily life in accessing basic safe water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH).³ The Sustainable Development Goal 6 calls for universal access to water and sanitation for all by 2030.

The Royal Government of Cambodia aims to achieve universal access to WASH by 2025. The National Strategic Plan for Rural WASH⁴ gives “*priority to the poorest and most underserved people and areas*”, and states that: “*the development and provision of Rural Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (RWSSH) services shall conform to the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; all projects and programs will consider the needs of persons with disabilities throughout all stages of their project/program cycles; and Disabled People’s Organisation will be included or represented in any consultation process and committee*”. Therefore, it is crucial that all WASH efforts reach these groups.

A 2014 WaterAid scoping study on inclusive WASH identified a gap at the policy level related to good practices in the WASH sector, and also found little collaboration across the WASH and disability sectors. The Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) was aware of WaterAid’s expertise on Equity and Inclusion and sought WaterAid’s technical advice on inclusive WASH guidelines development. The ‘National Guidelines on WASH for persons with disabilities and older people’ or ‘Inclusive WASH guidelines’ were developed to guide all stakeholders working in rural WASH to adopt inclusive approaches in WASH programs and implementation.

¹ National Institute of Statistics (2015). Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey 2014

² National Institute of Statistics (2012). Demographics of population ageing in Cambodia, 2012

³ 2014 WaterAid Accessible WASH in Cambodia Report

⁴ 2014 MRD: The National Strategic Plan for Rural Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (RWSSH) 2014-2025

Step-by-Step: Developing the Guidelines

Developing the guidelines involved planning, drafting guidelines, testing tools and approaches, revising and then finalising the guidelines.

Step 1: Planning to develop the guidelines

Building a partnership

The involvement of MRD at the beginning of the project was crucial to its success. An informal meeting between WaterAid and MRD was first conducted to plan for a working group meeting. This allowed MRD to get a full picture of the process and take the lead from the beginning.

WaterAid collaborated with CBM Australia, an expert on disability inclusion, to develop an initial draft of the guidelines'. It was important to bring global technical expertise as well as experiences and best practices on inclusive WASH from other countries.

During the informal meeting, it became clear that there was a need to increase the understanding and knowledge of inclusive WASH amongst MRD staff and Provincial Department of Rural Development (PDRD) staff prior to the working group meeting as it is a new topic for many people. A half-day inclusive WASH training was provided by WaterAid, Australia Red Cross (ARC), and the Disability Development Service Program (DDSP) to MRD and PDRD staff from the Departments of Water Supply and Rural Health Care.



Establishing a working group and developing the first draft of guidelines

The first working group meeting was facilitated by MRD and WaterAid and involved more than twenty participants from WASH and disability organisations, governments, NGOs and Disabled People Organisations (DPOs). It was important at this stage to establish two key groups and their roles to lead in the development of the guidelines – the Working Group and the Advisory Group. The Working Group worked on testing and revising the guidelines while the Advisory Group provided technical advice on content and process.

During this meeting, the NGOs and government agreed to perform testing and engage DPOs in each test on the following sections of the guidelines: Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS), sanitation marketing and water supply.

After incorporating the feedback from participants' and other WaterAid country offices on the ToC, a first draft of the guidelines was developed with technical support from CMB and was sent to the Advisory Group for their comments and feedback. Specifically, feedback was sought in the following areas: introduction to inclusive WASH for persons with disabilities and older people; four key actions for inclusive WASH; identifying people with disabilities and older people at the outset of the WASH program cycle; inclusive approaches of CLTS, sanitation marketing, water supply, behaviour change communication and accessible handwashing stations; and monitoring and evaluation inclusive aspects of WASH programs.

Step 2: Testing the guidelines in community WASH projects

WASH NGOs volunteered to test parts of the guidelines and separate planning meetings were held with each NGO. During this meeting, the team discussed schedules, location, tools, guidance notes to assist in testing each section and a template to document the process of testing. Planning also involved making sure that a local DPO was involved in every stage of the testing.

It was important to provide training and introduce the tool to the Working Group on inclusive WASH prior to the testing to raise awareness on disability inclusion and accessible WASH. The testing also created the linkages between DPOs and PDRD and WASH NGOs.

The NGO Cambodian Organisation for Children Development (COCD) worked with disability self-help groups to test the CLTS process during a pre-triggering in Kandal province. The testing focused on identifying households with a person with a



Figure1: Village map of in Kandal Steung district, Kandal province

disability by asking the following questions: Does anyone in your household have difficulty seeing? Walking? Hearing? Communicating/understanding information? Prior to the test, the village chief knew of two individuals with disabilities, but after asking these questions, more than 10 persons with disabilities were identified. (See figure 1)

UNICEF, PDRD Prey Veng, DPO and ARC worked collaboratively to test the monitoring of water supply using the Accessibility and Safety Audit (ASA) tool in Prey Veng and Siem Reap provinces. The ASA tool was used to identify which part of facilities are easy and which are difficult to use and any recommendations to improve accessibility. (See figures 2 and 3)



Figure 2: An older woman using the water supply facility in Siem Reap province



Figure 3: A wheelchair user using a water jar at their home in Prey Veng province

The MRD, PDRD Prey Veng and DPO tested CLTS Adult Triggering and Triggering with Children in Prey Veng province. As a consequence, PDRD Prey Veng linked up with DPO and also shared experiences on how to partner with DPOs with WASH NGOs and other PDRDs for inclusion of persons with disabilities in CLTS triggering. (See figure 4)



Figure 4: An old woman placing a replica of shit on "village map" in the location where she defecates daily, Kampong Cham province



Figure 5: A gentlemen with a physical disability practicing handwashing, Steung Treng province

In collaboration with Samaritan's Purse and a DPO Behaviour Change Communication sections were tested to ensure information was accessible to people with different impairments, especially hearing and visual impairments. (See figure 5)

The MRD, PDRD of Kampong Cham, Thbong Khmoum and Kampot and SNV and DPO tested CLTS-Triggering in Kampong Cham and Kampot province. The purpose was to work out how to include older people and persons with disability in the triggering. As a result, DPO integrated WASH topics in their action plans and meetings. DPO also collaborated with a WASH NGO marketing a water filter with

reasonable price for persons with disabilities. DPO in partnership with Handicap International promoted an accessible well to persons with disabilities in the community (see figures 6 and 7)



Figure 6: After triggering, children asked their parents to build a toilet for their home, Prey Veng province



Figure 7: Applying the triggering tool with communities and persons with disability in Prey Veng province

SNV, PDRD Kampot and DPO tested the ODF verification process in Kampot province. The purpose was to ensure the inclusion of persons with disability in the ODF verification process by interviewing persons with a disability and make sure that they were using a hygienic latrine. (See figure 8)



Figure 8: PDRD Kampot interviewing a wheelchair man, Kampot province

Step 3: Revising guidelines

MRD and Disability Action Council (DAC) leading the consultation to share results from the testing

Once the testing was finished, a consultative workshop, co-hosted by MRD and DAC (with technical support by WaterAid) aimed to update stakeholders on the testing process and obtain more ideas to improve and finalise the guidelines.

Engaging older people in developing the guidelines

Up to this point in the process there was limited involvement of older people and their views had not been well considered.



Figure 9: MRD facilitated a consultative workshop

Step 4: Finalising guidelines

Based on feedback from the consultative workshop and the advisory group, the national guidelines on *WASH for Persons with Disabilities and Older People* were finalised in both English and Khmer version in 2016. The guidelines have been endorsed by MRD and will be formally launched as part of a pack of new guidance documents to support implementation of the new National Action Plan on Rural WASH 2014 to 2018.

Step 5: Creative dissemination

While preparing the guidelines, WaterAid was inspired to find creative ways to raise awareness of inclusive WASH and promote the key messages from the guidelines.

WaterAid partnered with Epic Arts, an inclusive arts organisation known for using compelling performances and catchy songs to promote inclusion. Together with a group of five young artists, the two organisations developed a live performance and a series of short films for practitioners to watch on their smartphones. Each film highlights a key message or tool from the guidelines: how to work in partnership with a disabled persons' organisation; how to identify people with a disability in the community; how to do a barrier analysis; and how to conduct an accessibility and safety audit.

Therefore, WaterAid collaborated with HelpAge on a consultative meeting with Older People Associations (OPAs) in Battambang province to obtain their input on the guidelines to ensure their needs and issues had been accounted for and addressed.



Figure 10: Group photo was taken at the consultative meeting in Battambang province

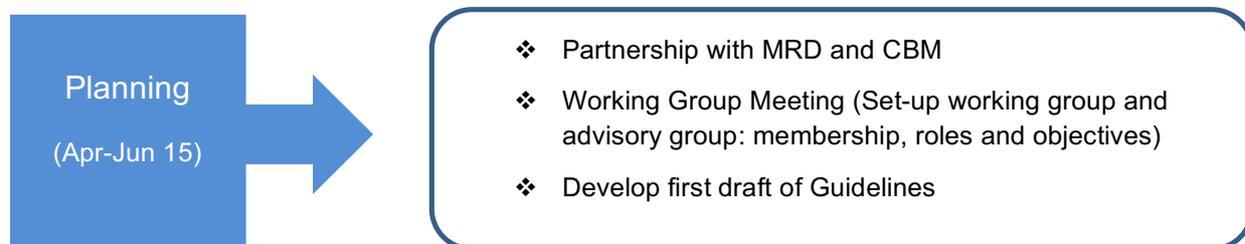


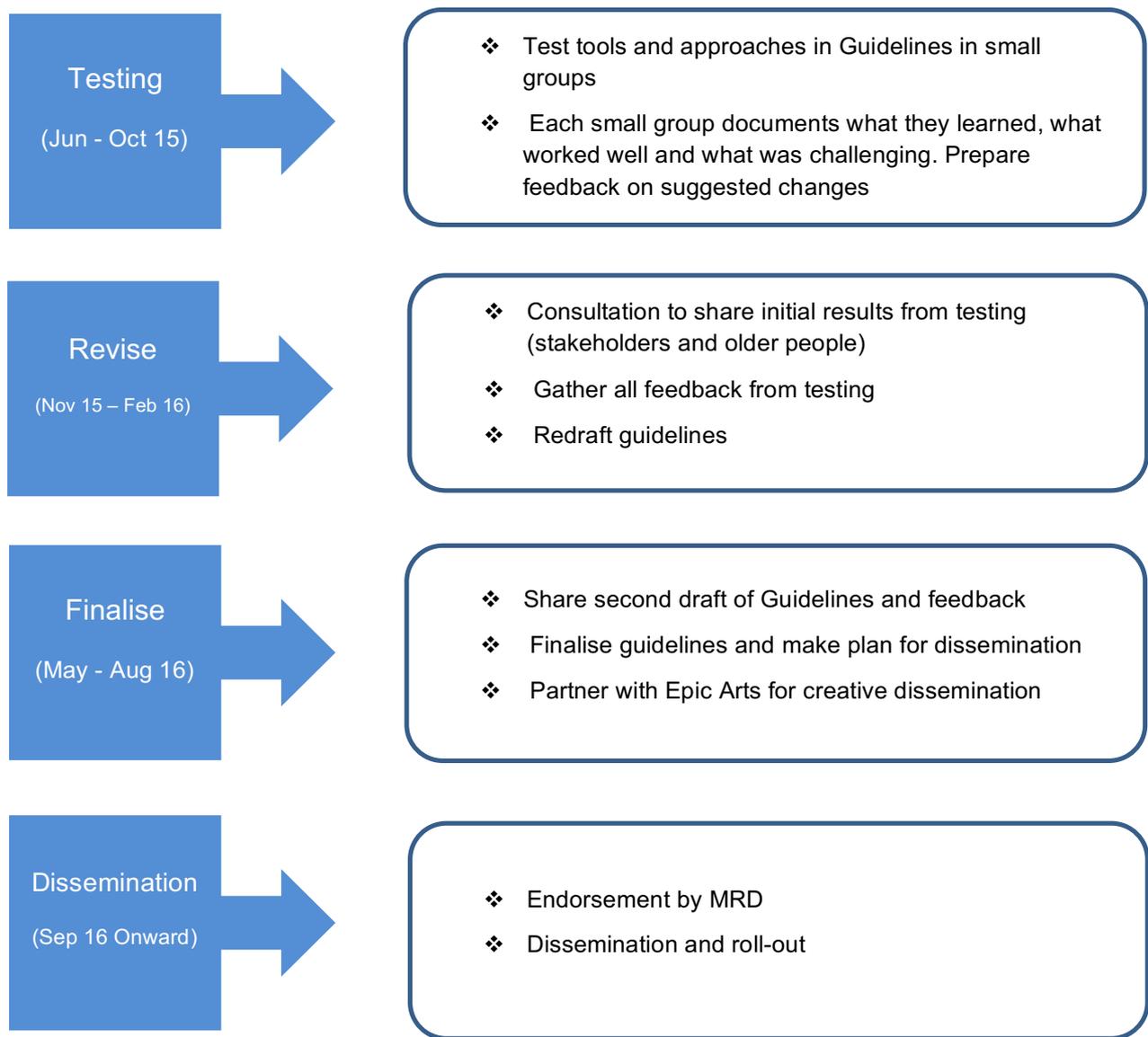
The creative process of working together as two organisations to clarify the messages and work out how to communicate them was rewarding, enriching and a lot of fun.

To watch the films please visit: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLc-oawSTIDS2ht3B_Es7MEr3acVo8geV3

Timeline of Developing National Guidelines on WASH for Persons with Disability and Older People

For organisations starting out on their journey to make development programs inclusive of people with disability and older people, these five steps are practical and doable. Below is a brief summary of each step with the timeframe. In total the process took around eighteen months.





Key Learnings and Challenges

Key Learning:

The leadership role of Government is critical:

MRD’s role in managing the process of developing guidelines was crucial. It led to more organisations engaging with the project. Moreover, this allowed testing guidelines in government programs. For example, the MRD collaborated with DAC to facilitate the consultative workshop and took a front seat throughout the process. The MRD staff involved had recently led the process of successfully developing other guidelines and was confident of the best way to run the process.

Increasing awareness as a first step must not be overlooked:

This was the first time provincial-level WASH staff had learned about inclusive WASH and it was important to first increase understanding and awareness of issues of persons with disabilities in accessing to WASH before doing testing. It also built relationships and experiences of working between DPOs and PDRD/MRD and older people for the future.

People with disabilities playing an active role in action learning processes leads to deeper understanding among all stakeholders:

The role of local Disabled People's Organisation (DPOs) collaborating with MRD to lead the testing was critical to engage persons with disabilities. It built trust between persons with disabilities and the facilitator. It led to more engagement and participation of persons with disabilities in testing. It also provided the opportunity to DPOs linking up with MRD/PDRD for the future collaboration to improve WASH for persons with disabilities.

Challenges:

There were also challenges during the development processes.

The process was time-intensive:

A great deal of time was invested to coordinate a large number of stakeholders to do testing. Overall developing the guidelines took almost double the amount of time initially envisaged. Testing of different sections had to fit with timings of NGO's community activities and therefore testing of sanitation marketing section of the guidelines was missed.

Behaviour Change Communication (BCC) material was inaccessible:

BCC material is often inaccessible when people cannot hear or see. Hygiene education sessions being difficult for people to attend due to different impairments may need to receive information in different format and meeting place.

WASH community facilitators had limited knowledge on disability inclusion:

Facilitators had brief training before testing, but once they were in the field, they still found it challenging. One example was when a facilitator met with a person with a hearing impairment, and it was their first time taking steps to include someone with a hearing impairment.

Changes in WASH Sector

During the process of developing the guidelines, there have already been some changes in WASH sector such as:

Increased awareness of inclusive WASH by NGOs and government:

MRD is taking ownership of this issue and leading new activities. MRD are now engaging DPOs in their work by having persons with disabilities and DPO join as participants in CLTS triggering meetings.

More inclusive WASH activities are being implemented on the ground:

PDRD and WASH NGOs have reported they are taking steps to be more inclusive. For example: in Prey Veng, the PDRD is planning to install six wells and is now considering how to change the standard design of the platform around the well to make it accessible to people with different impairments.

WASH NGOs being more inclusive within their own organisation:

World Vision reported that as a result of taking part in the testing, they engaged a person with disability in the design process for construction of five boreholes in Preah Vihear province. This also helped World Vision to understand accessible design of water supply infrastructure needs of persons with disabilities in the community.

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www.wateraid.org/cambodia

S.I. Building 3rd Floor, #93, Preah Sihanouk Blvd,
Sangkat Chaktomuk, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Tel: +855 17 935 083

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