



FACILITATING ACTIVE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: FROM CONSULTATION TO PARTICIPATION

Learning from local communities through
work with Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
(WASH) in South Africa and Zambia



A publication supported by the Australian Department
of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Oxfam Australia, and The
Alliance Centre for HIV, Health and Rights of Key Populations

‘Traditionally, in development, those in health focus on health; those in education focus on education; those in WASH, on WASH. But as development workers we need, instead, to trigger those things that will stimulate the community to take action, not only on one narrow issue but on the many that concern them...’

– David Mwamba, WASH Programme Manager, Oxfam GB in Zambia



WELCOME



WELCOME

ME

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A SHARED INTENTION

A note of support from The Alliance Centre for HIV, Health and Rights of Key Populations.

For a second time, The Alliance Centre is proud to be associated with the content outlined in this book. In this next volume, articulation of key learning has grown both in maturity and in intention, and we are excited about its application in our work.

As a Centre within the International HIV and AIDS Alliance offering thought-leadership on programming for key populations, the method of engagement described over the volumes in this series provides an evidence base for us to root our process of work in. We are confident that these key learnings constitute a framework for us to shape the argument that resonates with our core intent: to walk in solidarity with communities as they assert themselves to claim their rights and see their health needs met.

The rich content shared in Volume 1: *Facilitating Civic Engagement through Consultation* – especially the process outlining how to stimulate active participation – has provided a constructive theoretical outline to underpin how the Alliance Centre aims to approach its regional influencing work, addressing the HIV, Health and Rights of Key Populations. The Theory of Change

articulates the fundamental approach we will use as we nurture our movement building work with Linking Organisations of the Alliance in Africa. Though this initiative is at its inception, we foresee the content in this volume significantly steering our strategies as we chart our engagement.

We are looking forward to the development of a third piece to this series, one we will be actively involved in shaping and supporting. Through our collaboration with Wendy and Urvarshi from the Oxfam Australia team, we are affirmed in our belief to seek partnership, build on comparative advantage, and jointly add value to community strengthening, the effect of which will long outlive our direct support.

Flavian Rhode

DIRECTOR - Alliance Centre for HIV, Health and Rights of Key Populations



The Alliance Centre for HIV, Health and Rights of Key Populations is an initiative of The International HIV and AIDS Alliance, to locate thematic expertise and technical leadership for work with key populations – in particular, Commercial Sex Workers, LGBT people, and People Living with HIV – within the Global South. The Alliance is a global partnership of some 40 civil society organisations working on HIV, Health and Human Rights across four continents who, in turn, support thousands of in-country implementing partners. In its work, The Alliance exercises a bias towards most vulnerable populations, promoting a human rights programming approach among the marginalised, socially excluded, and disproportionately vulnerable; its vision is “ending AIDS through community action”. The Centre aims to build the capacity of national civil society and regional organisations to promote equality and rights, to generate intelligence for advocacy, and to facilitate improved access to health services for key populations. It prioritises learning from good practice in order to develop, promote and popularise transferable methodologies and principles effective for responsible, high-quality Key Populations Programming.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We hereby acknowledge the following people and organisations for their contributions to this book:

- David Nonde Mwamba, Joseph Pupe and Chantry Mweemba, from Oxfam Great Britain in Zambia
- Wendy Lubbee, John Nyamayaro and Urvarshi Rajcoomar from Oxfam Australia in South Africa

Through your tremendous support, vision, insight, dedication, commitment and guidance evolved the AACES program in Zambia and South Africa to be more than just a Water, Sanitation and Hygiene programme. The heart of the programme was about improving people's lives by expanding their voice and agency in matters that affect them.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to Keepers Zambia Foundation, Village Water Zambia, Young Women's Christian Association and Peoples' Participation Services in Zambia, and Hot Girls Fancy Stitch in South Africa, for so generously offering your time to share your stories and experiences. Your work, in general, and your contributions, more specifically, to this book are truly valued and it is hoped that your experiences will be an inspiration to others who wish to change their lives.

A very special thank you to Chief Ishiwambuto of Lumbo Ward and Chief Imamuna of Imalyo Ward in Zambia who, through your commitment and strong leadership are focussed on building lives and inspiring people in your ward to be their own agents of change.

This exciting journey started in 2015 when Ricardo Walters, the author, once again took up the challenge to produce the next adaptation in the series "Facilitating Civic Engagement". We would like to express our profound gratitude to Ricardo for his guidance, gracious support, and passion, and for producing another insightful document.

Oxfam Australia in South Africa



ACRONYMS

AACES	Australia Africa Community Engagement Scheme	M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
ACWSI	Access to Clean Water and Sanitation Initiative	MDIC	Maputaland Development and Information Centre
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome	MEL	Monitoring, evaluation and learning
APM	Area Pump Mender	NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development	NHI	National Health Insurance
CBO	Community-based Organisation	OAU	Oxfam Australia in South Africa
CLTS	Community-led Total Sanitation	OGB	Oxfam Great Britain in Zambia
CCPC	Community Child Protection Committee	PPCR	Pilot Project for Climate Resilience
CREATE	Community-based Rehabilitation Education and Training for Empowerment	PPS	People's Participation Service
DDP	Democracy Development Program	PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)	RAPCAN	Resources Aimed at the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect
ECD	Early Childhood Development	TU	Tholulwazi Uzivikele
GBV	Gender-based violence	VCT	Voluntary counselling and testing
HAPG	HIV/AIDS Prevention Group	VWZ	Village Water Zambia
HBC	Home-based care	WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus	WATSAN	Water and Sanitation
KZF	Keepers Zambia Foundation	WDC	Ward Development Committee
LIMA	Lima Rural Development Foundation	ZAFOD	Zambia Federation of Disability Organisations
		ZAPD	Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities

WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?

Winding its way through pit latrines and floodplains, through village school clubs and widows' savings groups, past Chinese contractors and bridges, from the World Bank to the seats of rural local government, stretching between Africa and Australia, the pages below contain stories of ordinary people, making extraordinary progress, in the places they call home.

That story is viewed through the lens of the Australia Africa Community Engagement Scheme (AACES), a community-led water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) initiative implemented in South Africa and Zambia by Oxfam Australia and Oxfam Great Britain, respectively.

It is not a case study. It is not an evaluation. It is, instead, a reflection on approaches that stimulate responsiveness in citizens and communities – based in their strengths – and enable more confident expressions of their civic voice and agency.

It is offered as an affirmation – optimistic, but not idealistic – of the potential of community-driven action to produce change, within and without. It is offered as an encouragement to development workers, policy makers and programmers about the potential of community – and the power of engagement and participation in the lived experience of others – to refresh, revitalise and inspire.

Sustainable change is almost always hard-won. Development implementers – often paddling upstream through unpredictable currents – can take the first step to cease the striving that too often comes with intervention: to climb out of the boat of their own uncertain devising, and step into the river where the action is. To risk, and trust the tide. To participate, and find, in that place, others who have learned to navigate the river through more familiar channels, sufficiently provoked by their presence to journey new courses together.

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE?

This book is the second volume in a series of publications focussed on identifying principles and practices for effectively facilitating the active civic engagement of communities and civil society organisations.

The first volume, *Facilitating Civic Engagement through Consultation: Learning from local communities through the NHI-Accountability Project in South Africa*, published by Oxfam Australia in February 2016, draws directly on the experience of the organisations and communities that participated in Governance and Accountability in the Health Sector: a People's Policy for Health in South Africa, an action-research project implemented through a partnership between Oxfam Australia in South Africa, the Global Health Unit at Monash University in Melbourne, and the School of Health Sciences at Monash South Africa.

The research project operated across three provinces in South Africa between 2011 and 2013, assessing the degree to which processes for health policy reform are generally open to public participation and, in particular, the provisions made for public participation in the development and implementation of South Africa's National Health Insurance legislation.

Working in partnership with three community-based organisations, Oxfam Australia in South Africa and Monash South Africa explored how democratic

processes for the introduction of the NHI in South Africa might be more participatory, inclusive and representative of civil society at its most basic level. Through the project, community-based partners were supported to design and implement a process for community consultation, specific and appropriate to their particular local context, that would make the emerging political discourse on the NHI at national level accessible to their respective communities in ways that promoted engagement and dialogue.

In 2015, two years after the conclusion of that project, Oxfam commissioned a process for process reflection and concept analysis, seeking to surface from the direct experience of NHI-project implementers and community members, significant learning related to approach, ways of thinking and ways of working in order to better characterise 'good consultation'. That analysis distilled an initial set of practices and principles of approach, describing consultation as a first step towards stimulating and strengthening local community engagement.

ADVANCING A STEP: FROM CONSULTATION TO PARTICIPATION

Volume Two in the series seeks to build on the foundations laid by the previous book, exploring similar dimensions of approach and response through the entry-point of a Water, Sanitation and Hygiene project (WASH) in two Southern African countries.

Applying the same analytical lens and frameworks, Volume Two aims to:

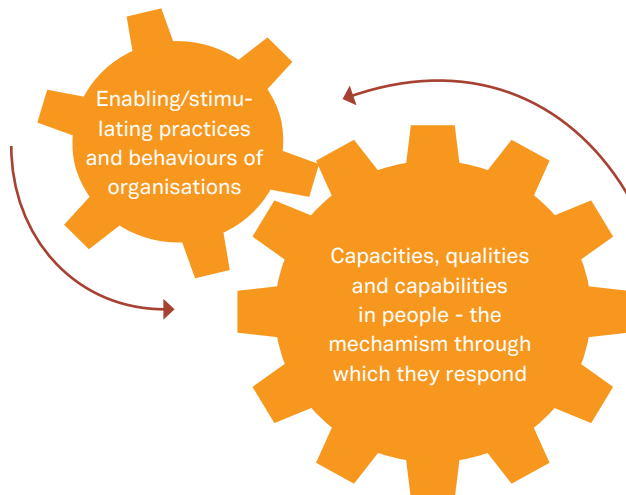
- Reinforce the Theory of Change established in the first volume, and expand its articulation and interpretation.

- Explore the hypothesis that the principles, practices and steps surfaced in Volume One – in relation to health policy reform – are not context specific, but are in fact transferable, able to be applied across a range of issues.
- Test the applicability of the practices, steps, principles and theories to a traditional development project offering service-delivery and basic commodities through WASH.

INTENTION

It must be emphasised that this publication is not intended as an evaluation of the Oxfam WASH project in South Africa and Zambia. It is not a systematic summary of the results and outcomes of that initiative, nor a narrative description of activities, or a thematic case study. As is standard practice, the WASH project that offers the lens for this work has been formally evaluated for effectiveness and impact through a mid-term review (Roper, 2014) and an end-of-program report (Roper, 2016).

This document, by contrast, explores along with complementary volumes in the series, those capacities, qualities and capabilities in people that make it possible for them to respond in life; the mechanism through which that response unfolds; and the corresponding enabling or stimulating practices and behaviours of organisations involved with communities in development.



This publication has been developed with the hope that:

- The lessons learned and reflected will contribute to promoting a more supportive, appreciative, enabling environment within civil society and the public sector for organisations seeking to stimulate and facilitate authentic community consultation, and for local communities seeking to amplify their own voice on issues material to their own lives.
- Its content might offer insight to programmers, development practitioners and policy-makers about practices and principles that stimulate responsiveness in citizens and communities, especially among those who are traditionally marginalised, owing to socioeconomic and political statuses.
- The material might provoke discussion among organisations and governments seeking to contribute to social transformation in the post-2015 development era: *“How do we work better to tap into*

community experience, knowledge and resourcefulness?”; “How do we work with communities to promote their leadership and response to issues, and to learn from them?”; “How do we better promote active civic engagement, and build personal agency for action?”

In synthesising and analysing experience generated through the WASH experience, this publication attempts to contribute towards a better understanding of the mechanics that drive community response, active citizenship and broad-based civic engagement. That discourse is hardly complete or exhaustive. The book is a tool – a second round in the series – from which to build a more robust knowledge asset of principles for approach, dynamically improving as new experience is identified and added, reviewed, refined, edited and adapted.

PROCESS: GENERATING THE CONTENT

Content for this volume was generated from several sources: a desk-based literature review; multiple interviews and discussions with Oxfam teammates responsible for the administrative, strategic and programmatic coordination of the WASH work in South Africa and Zambia; interaction with the full complement of AACES partners at the final OXFAM-AACES Partners Reflection Meeting in Livingstone (February 2016) through a participatory workshop; and visits to each implementing partner and their respective community teams, particularly in Zambia.

Throughout, simple story-telling and reflective conversation formed the basis of the approach and experience, the foundation for reflection and analysis.

STRUCTURE: A FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

Consistent with Volume One, this document reflects on the experiences and strategies of two distinct types of organisation involved in supporting community consultation and public participation through the AACES WASH project.

It draws on those experiences in order to propose effective, legitimate approaches – STEPS, PRACTICES and PRINCIPLES – that might be useful to:



Intermediary organisations who play a supporting role to organisations that, in turn, work directly with people in communities. Intermediaries act in solidarity with community-based organisations, offering technical assistance, capacity-building, financial resources, program advice or advocacy support to strengthen the ability of local organisations to work properly and deliver on their objectives.



Community-based organisations (CBOs) that work directly within specific local communities; contributing to transformation by delivering programs and services that meet the development, health and justice needs of people in the places where they live.

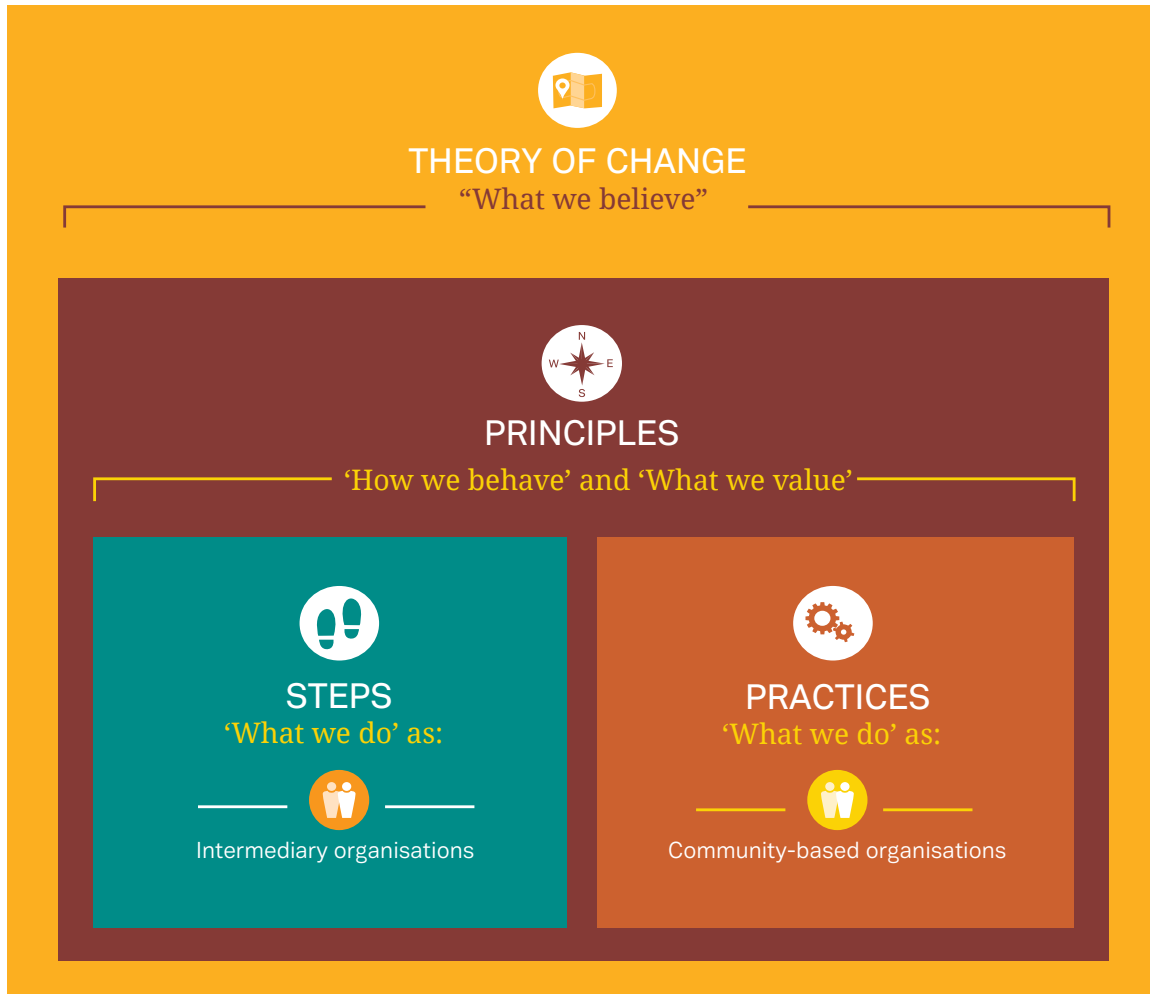
The document is organised around several components of practice and response. The components are complementary; interrelated but not linear or sequential; a way to think about how response happens within communities, the impact it produces, and the behaviours of organisations seeking to stimulate and learn from it.

Components include:

1.  A THEORY OF CHANGE, recognising consultation as the first in a sequence of stages that trigger participation, leading progressively towards active, mature civic engagement by communities. The Theory of Change can be thought of as “What we believe”.
 2.  A sequence of STEPS for primarily intermediary organisations wishing to support communities towards engagement, response and action, based on the presence of certain environmentally enabling preconditions necessary for effective facilitation.
 3.  A set of common PRACTICES – essentially, replicable ways of working primarily for CBOs operating at the community level. These practices appear commonly among those CBOs reporting strong community participation as a result of their facilitation approach, despite differences in organisational identity, geography, and social context.
- Collectively, the steps and practices can be thought of as “What we do”.
4.  Reflecting on the many stories shared, an assortment of PRINCIPLES emerges: essentially, transferable ways of thinking about how the work happens; the character of the approach. The principles describe simple conditional concepts for response and facilitation of response that achieve predictable outcomes: that if we apply a certain action according to a particular value, then we can anticipate certain results in the way that communities respond, across a range of issues, topics and themes. The principles can be thought of as “How we behave” and “What we value”.

THE FOUR COMPONENTS

The components are complementary, interrelated but not linear or sequential, a way to think about how consultation happens, and what impact it produces.



THE CONTEXT:

A BACKGROUND TO AACES AND WASH

As Margaret Roper records in her end-of-program report of the Oxfam Australia Africa Community Engagement Scheme (Roper, 2016):

The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), through the Australia Africa Community Engagement Scheme (AACES), funded the Oxfam Community Led Access to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) program in South Africa and Zambia. Oxfam is a global confederation of 17 affiliates dedicated to fighting poverty and related injustice around the world, through working together to achieve greater impact by their collective effort. The Oxfam global program in South Africa and Zambia is being implemented in targeted communities, where common themes present an opportunity for linked programming and learning towards positive, sustainable change in the lives of people living in poverty.

The AACES WASH program was implemented over a five-year period (2011-2016) and aimed to enable Australian NGOs and their partners to contribute to the DFAT strategy for Africa, through a partnership program focused on community-based interventions across the sectors of water, sanitation and hygiene, food security and maternal and child health.

The AACES objectives are threefold: that marginalised people have sustainable access to the services they require; Australian aid policy and programs in Africa are strengthened, particularly in their ability to target and serve the needs of poor and vulnerable groups;

and increase the opportunity for the Australian public to be informed about development issues in Africa. The Oxfam program goal was to improve the health and quality of life of the poor and vulnerable in targeted areas of Zambia and South Africa. Within this goal, there are five Oxfam objectives:

1. **Increased access** to and the effective use of improved, integrated and sustainable water supplies, sanitation and hygiene services
2. **Reduced WASH-related inequalities** in the delivery of services to women and vulnerable groups in the target areas
3. **Strengthened capacity** of stakeholders to manage and implement WASH programs on a sustained basis
4. **Improved WASH governance and effectiveness**
5. **Documenting and sharing** the learning that informs policy, public engagement and program development and growth

Oxfam worked in partnership with a number of organisations in South Africa and Zambia to implement the program. These organisations worked directly with community structures and members in the targeted

areas. In Zambia, the partners worked with government agencies such as the local authorities, Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities and the Zambian Police Service to deliver the different components of the program. In addition, organisations and individuals were contracted over the lifespan of the program to provide technical assistance and or capacity building of partners to support and deepen implementation practice. Organisations such as Community Based Rehabilitation Education and Training for Empowerment (CREATE) focussed on disability-inclusion, Training and Resources in Early Education (TREE), Equal Education (EE) (advocacy in South Africa), and Resources Aimed at Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect (RAPCAN) supported the program in South Africa. In Zambia, the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) focussed on anti GBV campaigns, empowering community members – particularly women – to participate effectively in decision-making and action to combat gender violence and child abuse. The Zambia Federation of Disability Organisation (ZAFOD) supported a focus on disability, while the Zambian Police Service contributed expertise around child protection.

The focus was not only on the program elements, but also on empowering processes, developing and mentoring strong and well-functioning structures and institutions at community level and through its partnerships with civil society organisations and relevant government structures. The aim was to establish platforms and networks whereby communities could influence government structures and duty-bearers.

As stated in the design document: 'sustainability, in this program, will be reflected in knowledgeable, skilled and confident individuals and communities; quality WASH facilities and services; adequate WASH systems and processes; and strong well-coordinated community structures and duty-bearers'.

*“If people are properly activated,
then they take responsibility for
contributing to and sustaining the
development benefits relevant to
their own lives...”*

– Village Water Zambia







COMPONENT 1

THEORY OF CHANGE

The AACES WASH initiative through The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) enabled Australian NGOs and their partners to contribute towards strengthening community-based interventions around water, sanitation and hygiene. The broad aim of the partnership was that marginalised people have sustainable access to the services they require.

Oxfam chose to respond to this opportunity in a quite particular way. Instead of delivering WASH services and infrastructure, it focussed on strategies to achieve sustainable access to water and sanitation by building the capacity of communities to, themselves, facilitate sustainable WASH outcomes. This required that WASH be seen in an integrated way, an interrelated set of public and relational health issues with long-term development implications. Adopting this perspective to community-based WASH interventions – rather than the considerably simpler direct delivery of water and sanitation infrastructure – meant that success of the Oxfam approach rested on the ability of communities to engage with power relations within all spheres and at all levels of society.

To satisfy Oxfam’s projected vision for change, communities would need to engage with their internalised perception of their own power, rights and responsibilities – taking up initiative and leadership around their

own development; not defaulting to duty-bearers in the state, or to development organisations, to simply supply or provide; communities would need to find confidence and competence to exercise their voice and constructively engage with duty-bearers and with the public structures accountable for the delivery of services; communities would need to engage with their own localised distribution of power within households, neighbourhoods and districts in order to address questions of inclusion, equitable access for all, and protection of the vulnerable.

This was an ambitious vision, and a seemingly indirect approach to implementing what, on the surface, was a water and sanitation service-delivery project. Substantial change would be necessary at the levels of programming, local community action and public service in order to satisfactorily achieve the goal.

But, at a fundamental level, development work is all about change.

Over the course of a development process, movement happens so that, by the end of that process, something is different – better – to how it was before. Quality of life has improved. Attitudes have shifted. Laws have reformed. Systems have adapted. Some aspect of transformation is always the goal.

If change is the result, a Theory of Change is an idea to explain how that result comes into effect, and how it might be produced, and what it might lead to.

Volume One of this series of publications – *Facilitating Civic Engagement through Consultation: Learning from Local communities through the NHI-Accountability Project in South Africa* – began the work of constructing a simple Theory of Change: an explanation for how and why change occurs. Based on analysis of stories and experiences generated from communities and community-based organisations over the course of that project, it suggests that:

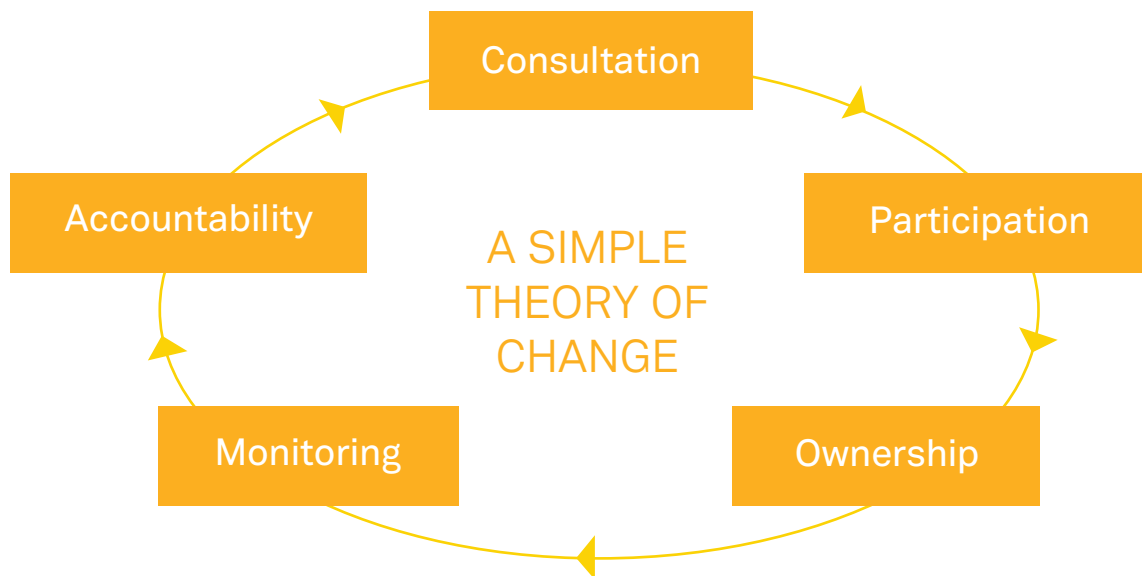
1. Civic engagement – the active responsiveness of citizens and other community members to issues that concern them – is an expression of the **innate strength** resident in every community. Every community has the **capacity** to express leadership and initiative, hopefulness towards the future and will to act or change.
2. These innate capacities can be **suppressed, oppressed or diverted** by a variety of factors, many of these related to the unjust or improper exercise of power by a disabling domestic or socio-political environment, or by a disabling paradigm (e.g. where communities are accustomed to being passive beneficiaries of occasional commodities through supply-driven development approaches; or comfortable with the well-intentioned provision of charitable organisations; or frustrated and disenfranchised by the routine disregard for their human and civil rights; or silenced through lack of access to rights and services that build dignity and agency).
3. As much as the **strength to respond** and engage can be suppressed, it can also be **stimulated**. Engagement – the expression of responsiveness – can be the fruit of a process at work in people and in communities.
4. **Consultation** can be a first step in that process, if appropriately facilitated.

(Consultation is extensively described in the first volume of this series, exploring the NHI-Accountability Project in South Africa). Community-based organisations and Intermediary Organisations can be helpful aids to **facilitating consultation**. Organisations are not necessary in order for people in communities to meet together, think together, talk together, but their appropriate presence may help that process move more smoothly.

5. ‘Consultation’ and ‘participation’, although commonly used as interchangeable terms are not the same thing. **Consultation is an action**, at its most authentic practised by those seeking to support, to stimulate and to include others who are most central to an issue. **Participation is an effect**, catalysed by successful consultation, and an indicator of increasing local ownership and initiative. Good consultation jumpstarts the process of active civic engagement.
6. Consultation need not be an end in itself, a discrete, isolated, once-off event. Instead, the ultimate goal of good consultation is active civic engagement by members of a community. Achieving this goal may require a **process of ongoing consultation** over time.



PPS: “Consultation is not an event. It was an ongoing process throughout the project, at every stage of the project. There are different levels of consultation, with deepening effects as trust grows. Many aspects of the programme evolved naturally, because we were consultation-based. Activities became demand-driven - because they were generated by the community who wanted to respond to issues that surfaced - not needs-driven or supply-driven.”

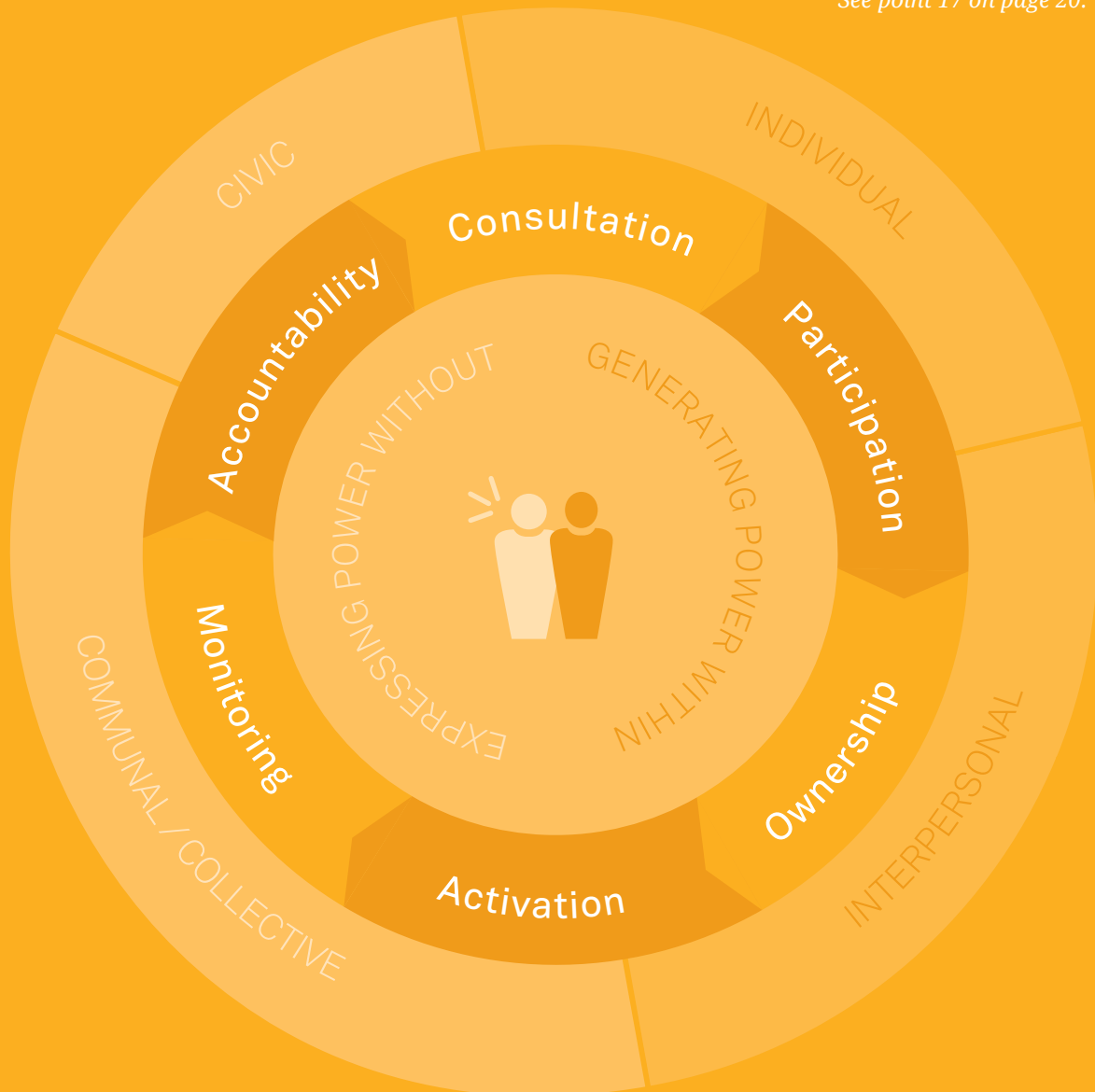


7. Consultation and participation are distinct stages along a sequence of responsiveness by members of a community, leading towards ‘**accountability**’.
8. If consultation is appropriately and effectively facilitated, it will lead to greater levels of participation – both in quality and in magnitude – by communities in framing health priorities and health policy; subsequently, if policies, programmes and initiatives are framed by local communities themselves and if community members have a legitimate opportunity to shape content, they will take ownership of the issues most important to them. Once they own their issues they will take action to monitor progress around those issues, and grow in confidence, ability and expectation with which to hold duty-bearers to account for poor public service.

PPS: “As an organisation, our own M&E expanded to M&E AND Learning (MEL) as we got closer to the communities. We learned what was working best by participating ourselves with the people, so we could adapt, but also because they were already looking to see what was working and what wasn’t. We could not afford – both in time and in money – to monitor the communities in any detail. The community facilitators – people within the community, members of that community – take responsibility for self-monitoring and reporting results that can later be verified. Proper consultation creates a road for all parties, the CBO, the INGO and the community, to walk together.”

THEORY OF CHANGE: A THEORY OF RESPONSIVENESS

See point 17 on page 20.



9. **Consultation** leads to participation; **participation** builds ownership; **ownership** promotes monitoring; **monitoring** leads to accountability; and **accountability** is a high-level demonstration of active civic engagement.

The work undertaken through the Oxfam AACES WASH project goes some way towards expanding on this initial rudimentary Theory of Change.

Through a variety of engagements – conversation and joint process analysis, experience-sharing and story-telling, critical discourse and reflection – AACES partners in Zambia and South Africa have significantly deepened the concepts and themes surrounding what is emerging as a Theory of Responsiveness (see the diagram on page 18).

10. On power: Civic Engagement is a manifestation – an expression – of self-governance and self-determination by individuals and communities, as is their local choice and action for change. These expressions are possible because of the **agency** – the personal power – of human beings to think and act in the places where they live.
11. On approach: In building capacity to achieve health or development outcomes, organisations need an **approach that is conscious and respectful** of this human agency. Change is not in the hands of the development workers or organisations. People in their communities – individually and collectively – are responsible for their own change, for their personal growth, for achieving health outcomes that must belong to them, and not be prescribed or imposed by an organisation or structure.



Activated communities exercise their agency to demand accountability and services.

Village Water: The Ward Development Committees (WDCs) were a concept of government to decentralise governance to local level. WDCs were there, loosely, in theory and on paper, but were not systematically guided in their work through Ward Plans.

The WDCs were established in practice and the process of developing Ward Plans were introduced through the WASH work under AACES. The strategy supported a demand-driven approach to development where communities put pressure on government for particular service-delivery that was relevant to them. This was very different to the traditional supply-driven approach, where the state provides what it thinks all communities need, and communities are passive recipients of things they don't really want or need.

The WDCs really became a vehicle for their communities to influence the structures. Typically, influential people in the community – like the community leaders – will call for a community meeting. People gather and talk about what they feel they need and what action they need to take. Usually public officials with access to government – like the elected Ward Counsellors – are invited, and the meeting is officially minuted. Those minutes are then submitted to the Ward Counsellor to represent the communities' interests in local government meetings, generating demand.

12. On approach: If organisations become more conscious of power and agency, then their development work is ultimately about supporting **the deepening expression of agency** by individuals and communities, by supporting people to generate power within.
13. On approach: People grow from their own formative experiences and have capacity to think freely, to make independent choices, to take individual and collective action. But they need not strive unnecessarily in isolation; they need not be abandoned and left to their own devices. People are vulnerable, but still viable, and this offers organisations the opportunity to support and **accompany** communities as they act on their strengths, provided this can be done in appropriate, non-paternalistic ways.
14. On approach: if appropriately facilitated, consultation, participation and ownership are stages in the response process that support individuals and communities **generate power within**, and build agency. Activation, Monitoring and Accountability are stages in the response process where individuals and communities **express their will and power** to more actively shape the structures within the society around them.
15. On consultation: Consultation can follow many forms but, ultimately, it is about an **enabling space**: safe, non-prescriptive, non-directive. It is a space for communities to surface issues, analyse, prioritise, and set their agenda. At the same time, it is a space where CBOs can play a convening role, and learn from the community based on what emerges in their discussion. Creating enabling space does not happen automatically; if CBOs are playing a convening role, it is necessary that they do the work of relationship-building in order to identify appropriate relational entry-points in order to hold the space well.
16. Good consultation produces **constructive outcomes**: increased information, increased awareness, increased acknowledgement and recognition of vulnerabilities and responsibilities, shifted attitudes and clarified vision. These outcomes of good consultation are **catalysts to the next stage** in the process: participation.
17. The expanded Theory of Change – a Theory of Responsiveness – includes an added dimension: **Activation**. Individuals and communities may feel a deep sense of ownership of an issue (such as access to water, or better health through better sanitation). It may touch them intellectually and emotionally. But ownership is not the same as activation. As ownership deepens, engagement with the issue builds, until the will to act translates into specific action of some kind. The activation stage is evidenced by increased expression of voice, agency and initiative; increased demand for services and rights; and increased utilisation of services.
18. The AACES experience suggests, most strongly evidenced in Zambia, that **sound facilitation of response** produces not one, but two effects.
- a. Consultation catalyses the progression of people through deepening stages of engagement towards Accountability and Influencing.
 - b. At the same time, the process builds **social cohesion** – a willingness of members of the community to work together, even though they may come from different backgrounds and experiences – so that engagement, awareness, choice and will to act deepen from individual to interpersonal (e.g. household; neighbour), to communal (e.g. neighbourhood; village), to civic (community; district; political). Facilitation, consultation and public participation conspire to build community, leading to such effects as inclusion.

19. The Theory of Change is a useful tool for development programmers and community members to visualise their progress, to recognise stages where they may be 'stuck' – either in terms of the participation level or the social cohesion level – to reflect on the reasons for this blockage, and identify strategies to become unstuck. For instance, could it be in one scenario that response is held up at the participation stage, but not progressing to deeper ownership and action, because cohesion is not developing beyond discrete interpersonal interaction towards broader communal engagement? Could it be in another scenario that pleasingly good progress is being made until the response process gets stuck at the accountability stage, because collective action by a community gives up power by defaulting to duty-bearers to supply and provide for needs at their discretion, instead of continuing to express power and constructively demand for services to which they have a right?
20. Participation is two-way. It does not only happen by the community that shows signs of greater involvement, or engagement in processes, or uptake of services. Organisations facilitating the response process – CBOs and intermediaries, agencies and public servants – are also participants in the process, though in a space that does not belong to them. These organisations are participants in the process of development with people, in the spaces those people inhabit – in the spaces they call home – and have to position themselves so as not to impose on the hospitality, relationship and invitation of the community to join in on its process of change and response. For facilitative organisations to presume otherwise is to severely dilute, compromise and misrepresent their legitimacy in that community space.

The Theory of Change is a useful tool for development programmers and community members to visualise their progress, to recognise stages where they may be 'stuck' – either in terms of the participation level or the social cohesion level – to reflect on the reasons for this blockage, and identify strategies to become unstuck.



WHAT DOES ACTIVE PARTICIPATION LOOK LIKE? HOW IS IT RECOGNISED? WHAT ARE THE SIGNS?

Imalyo Ward Representative: “People recognised the benefits of using toilets for themselves. We see other communities where toilets have gone to waste because the right preparation work has not been done, and people were not given time to really think about the need to change. And yet, in other communities, where there have been champions nearby, they are implementing from their own initiative without being directly sensitised.

During the time that the community facilitators were being trained, the Chiefs were invited to attend that event to learn what the champions were being trained on. When we went back, we could realise that the community was getting involved when they started doing the construction of their own pit latrines. Every person covered their own costs for their own latrine, using local supplies to construct them. Some people who had never been trained or sensitised were copying their neighbours and constructing latrines on their own.

Even nearby villages who were not yet sensitised – no one had visited them yet – started implementing the WASH activities. Villages nearby wondered why, for instance, a partner organisation vehicle was visiting a particular community. It made them curious: they wondered about the objectives. Sometimes someone curious would walk around to that village, and get to see others implementing the activities and begin to ask questions.”

PPS: “People were using local material and adapting them for use in construction so that they could do the work from their own resources. For instance, people were using ash, termite mound and clay instead of concrete. People changed their behaviour: Lumbo Ward has been declared Open Defecation Free (ODF), the first ward of its kind. We have seen since the WDC was established, local leaders expecting that civil servants be brought into the community to address issues of school governance, with an increased expectation of those servants to do their work. The WDC is being used as a ‘weapon’ for the betterment of the community, and is leading to better connection between community members (e.g. action to address the early closure of schools by teachers).”

Min. of Health, Luampa: “From our perspective in the Ministry of Health here in the district, we noticed that there was more curiosity from the communities. It was growing from the end of 2011 and through the PRA activities. The community had started to realise that something wasn’t okay in their area and that something needed to change. And people were asking all kinds of questions about this process that was taking place; critical questions, not only complying with the project or receiving services. They wanted to understand what was going on, and what this would mean for them.”

KZF: “High levels of attendance at the community meetings throughout the process. Even times when these meetings were convened at short notice, they attracted big numbers, and more and more they included people living with disabilities, who were either brought to the meetings by their own families (who would not do that before), or felt welcome enough to attend on their own.

During the time when boreholes were being dug, the community members joined spontaneously to gather sand, and stones, to bring local materials. Some didn’t bring anything, they just wanted to be there to be a part of the events, and to contribute to digging the pits. People volunteered themselves to do it.”

PPS: “We recognised participation when community members started to identify local issues based on what was worrying them personally, going beyond just making lists of things they needed. We recognised when people started to analyse their own information to interpret what it meant for them, and to plan how to respond to that data. We recognised ownership when they realised what they needed in order to benefit their own lives, and could identify what they could do themselves, and where they needed to lobby duty-bearers to assist.”

PPS: “During the PRA in the communities, part of our consultation process, people quickly began to participate. Some very personal stories and experiences were shared, and the communities started to analyse these issues – what was at the root of them. As the hygiene

and sanitation issues surfaced and were interrogated, people began to erect latrines, paid for from their own resources. And a few early adopters – people who very quickly began to implement these activities at their household level – influenced the behaviour of the many. Other neighbours got activated to put up their own latrines, and drying racks. And even started to innovate and personalise the latrines – different styles, different looks, different decorations. And as some structures eroded over time, people monitored how well they were holding up, and repaired and replaced them to keep them functional.”

David was a school drop-out. He had the eagerness to improve his life, but couldn’t find direction. He was taken on by Village Water Zambia in 2005 and trained as a pump mender and well-digger, working with other trainees to dig between 10 and 20 wells per year, sub-contracted by Village Water Zambia. As we developed our own expertise and technology, David was introduced with a group of three other diggers to manual well drilling. These were men who had no idea what a bank looked like, or what it meant to have an account, earning only about 200 kwacha per year.

During the training period, group members were encouraged to think about applying their skills to become an enterprise.

David always expressed a strong desire to learn and do more, and by 2013 he decided he could go it alone. He formed his own company and employed his own staff.

Now, he is drilling wells for private individuals in the community as an independent contractor, and doing some sub-contracted work for Village Water as well.

He costs all his own jobs and negotiates his own contracts. Since that time, he has become financially stable. He has built a house for himself. He has created employment for others. He even hired a deep-drilling rig and paid a technician to operate it so that he could have a borehole installed in his own property where the ground was not suited to drilling with his manual drilling technique.

Gracious was an ordinary housewife, serving in her community as a community WASH volunteer and promoting good hygiene. She got involved with VWZ in 2004, and we immediately recognised her strength and determination. We connected her to the opportunity for training in well-digging, and from there to other

training in manual well-drilling. She took to the process immediately. Since that time, she has become one of the most reliable well-drillers produced to date by VWZ. She formed her own company, on an even bigger scale than David, operating four teams of drillers simultaneously. She has now negotiated contracts with the council and government all over the province, and still sub-contracts for VWZ and others from time to time. She has built a house for herself on her own property, and has constructed other homes available for rent in the community.

And she's gone beyond well-digging; she's developed herself to be a contractor for construction, and is now building latrines for schools in the area.

“If people are properly activated, then they take responsibility for contributing to and sustaining the development benefits relevant to their own lives...” (Village Water Zambia)



COMPONENT 2

STEPS

*for intermediary
organisations*

Intermediary Organisations play a supporting role to organisations that, in turn, work directly with people in communities. Intermediaries act in solidarity with community-based organisations, offering technical assistance, capacity-building, financial resources, programme advice or advocacy support to strengthen the ability of local organisations to work properly and deliver on their objectives.

For the AACES WASH programme, Oxfam Australia in South Africa and Oxfam Great Britain in Zambia acted in the capacity of Intermediary Organisations.

Volume One of this series of publications – *Facilitating Civic Engagement through Consultation: Learning from local communities through the NHI-Accountability Project in South Africa* – explored the characteristics of ‘good consultation’, and its pivotal role in catalysing and strengthening the resolve of community-based organisations and communities themselves to express civic action for change, development and accountability.

It became clear through that analysis that the consultative process – the action itself and its effects – is just that: a dynamic process, not a discrete event, playing out organically at the local level in ways that are not always linear or easily predictable.

For those organisations that seek to work with communities through good consultation – responsible, responsive, respectful, appropriate consultation – a balance needs to be struck between sensitivity and discipline, process-control and process-freedom, anticipation and surprise. This kind of consultation is best achieved through participatory, facilitative approaches.

Learning from local communities through the NHI-Accountability Project in South Africa observed that consultation – where active civic engagement and accountability are the goals – is not achieved through any single, standard, mechanistic, “one-size-fits-all” model.

There may well be, however, a series of systematic STEPS to guide an Intermediary Organisation seeking to strengthen community-driven initiative and influencing in ways that are strategic, efficient, responsive to local capacity, and appropriate. For Intermediary Organisations that work to support the efforts of community-based organisations, these STEPS answer the question ‘What do we do?’ in relation to contributing towards broad-based civic action and influencing.

The STEPS have been extracted and synthesised, illustrated through a variety of practical experiences throughout the life-cycle of the AACES Project as it was implemented at Intermediary Organisation level by Oxfam Australia in South Africa, and Oxfam Great Britain in Zambia¹. The STEPS are supplemented and complemented by similar, reinforcing stories in the later section of this document focussed on PRINCIPLES.

ASSUMPTIONS AND PRECONDITIONS

It follows that, if the sequence of action proposed in the STEPS approach is viable – as increasingly suggested by anecdotal evidence – then the process can be consciously and systematically applied by Intermediary Organisations across a range of issues, and potentially constitute a logical framework for programme and process design.

That assumption, however, should take into account a number of considerations. The approach assumes a set of enabling pre-conditions for its optimal application:

1. That Intermediary Organisations have done the work to develop authentic relationships with local community-based partners, characterised by mutual trust and respect, and that these relationships have enjoyed sufficient time to mature.
2. That Intermediary Organisations are committed to, and capable of, working through a collaborative, inclusive, multi-disciplinary and cross-sectoral approach, that cultivates team-practice. This requires high levels of reciprocity and mutualism; the ability to recognise the capacity and contribution of others; and the capability to efficiently administer the comparative advantage of each partner for the benefit of the team.
3. That Intermediary Organisations are geared internally – embedded within the working culture of their organisation – towards facilitative ways of working: an interest in learning from local action; a willingness to participate with local communities, even in those spaces where the organisation does not lead; a commitment to process-facilitation rather than direction and instruction; and a value to act in solidarity with communities without acting on behalf of those communities.
4. That Intermediary Organisations are sufficiently self-aware of power within the complex system of relationships: between the Intermediary and the CBO; between the Intermediary and other partners; between the Intermediary, the CBO and the community; within the community itself between, for instance, age groups and genders. How is power expressed? How is it perceived and experienced? How is it navigated and negotiated? How is it subtly exercised to control, limit or promote the freedoms, equity and participation of others?

Intermediaries need to also be aware and transparent about the role they may adopt relative to communities and community-based organisations: are they direct implementers of programmes and services? Are they solidarity-organisations simply supporting the efforts of communities through relationship and capacity-strengthening? Are they process-facilitators, working through invitation and opportunity to stimulate action by CBOs and communities?

A PRE-CONDITION:

We have developed credible relationships with local-level partners.

A PRE-CONDITION:

We don't work alone; we look around us to build a team with others, representing a mix of skill, experience, common vision and shared interest.

A PRECONDITION:

We are committed to facilitative approaches, believing that when we become too directive, we lose the space for SERENDIPITY, for EMERGENCE and for INTEGRATION.



A PRECONDITION: We have developed credible relationships with local partners working directly at community level.

Oxfam Australia in South Africa, through the Joint Oxfam HIV and AIDS Programme (JOHAP) commencing in 1998, made a commitment through its strategic documents to strengthen civil society to effectively respond to HIV. The model was to work with local organisations at a community level, as partners in response, as these organisations were already responding through a visible presence in communities, working directly with those most affected by the issue. Oxfam respected these partners' sound understanding of the local context that enabled them to design programmes relevant and appropriate to the needs of the communities they served.

From the mid-2000s, Oxfam Australia in South Africa had been working with partners in the Umkhanyakude district in the Kwazulu-Natal province on livelihoods programmes, including income-generation, food security and skills development. From 2008 onwards, partners in that district began to raise concerns about water, both around quality of water and the limitations of access. The concern around poor water access was escalating over time as, increasingly, water became a factor that limited the ability of partners to deliver their livelihoods programmes. The Oxfam team decided to further interrogate the severity of the water issue in the district, as it was still unclear where the barriers to access were. A meeting in 2010, convened with partner organisations working in the district, revealed that the issues around access to water, primarily, were advocacy issues. It appeared as though there were certain political challenges around water access in the district, compounded by challenges in the provincial budget around provision of piped water. While Oxfam did not originally set out with the intention to engage around water issues, demand emerging from the experience of the partners working at community level created this opportunity.

PPS: "We are a local NGO working in Western Province, Zambia, established in 1996. We are the oldest Oxfam partner in this province. Our focus is on improving the livelihood of the rural disadvantaged.

Oxfam, through the AACES project, was looking at working with marginalised populations in a way that was a match for our vision: work with children, with women, and with people living with disabilities. We shared the same values about inclusion. So, we became the first partners with Oxfam in the WASH project, identified because Oxfam realised we had the capacity to implement, and to link the community with other service providers. We had been operating for twenty years and were an experienced NGO, known by the communities and working closely with them at their level – not only through service delivery – for a long time. Water and Sanitation were not new ideas to us, since we had gained experience in previous projects in Zambia including WATSAN and ACWSI, and in that area – as with others – we were recognised favourably by government."

Village Water Zambia: "We did not join the AACES project right away; we were a late entrant, only joining in from 2013. But we were an indigenous organisation, working in Zambia from as far back as 2007, and had been working in the same communities that the AACES project was supporting. We had a reputation with these communities and brought local knowledge of the area. Our work – especially in hygiene promotion and water-point provision – was well recognised by communities and by public authorities."

A PRECONDITION: We don't work alone; we look around us to build a team with others, representing a mix of skill, experience, common vision and shared interest, across a variety of sectors, and a variety of stakeholders.

Oxfam Australia in South Africa: “We were required to integrate disability and child protection into the AACES programme. This was a compliance stipulation by the project back-donor, a requirement for implementing AACES. Oxfam recognised that we were not child-protection experts, and partnered with RAPCAN, a recognised child protection organisation in South Africa. Similarly, CREATE was identified as a partner organisation with expertise in disability-inclusion. These organisations provided technical support to those partners directly implementing WASH work through AACES, for sensitisation, capacity-building, and support to integrate child-protection and disability into their existing work.

It was important that partners independently acknowledge and recognise the value of having policies around child protection and disability-inclusion, rather than have these imposed on them as an issue driven by donor priorities. From this perspective especially, RAPCAN and CREATE made for good partners to Oxfam because of their shared values around facilitation, responsible consultation, participation, ownership and accountability in the ways they would work with WASH partners.”

Oxfam Australia in South Africa: “WASH had never been a core programming area for Oxfam Australia in South Africa, and experience was limited. A number of specialists with expertise were drawn into the process to better inform an understanding of the context for WASH in South Africa, and subsequent decisions on design and implementation:

Mary Galvin, an expert on WASH-related issues, contributed to contextual analysis and researched the effectiveness of CLTS; Mvula Trust and LIMA

contributed to conceptualising an approach for WASH. We also drew on the expertise of Oxfam WASH specialists based in Melbourne to help us – they were available to us for technical advice on design, and reviewed and commented on design elements.

Laila Smith was a DFAT technical expert based in Pretoria, the WASH advisor for East and Southern Africa; she was up to date with what was going on in the sector, and had a very good understanding of what governments were and were not doing. She knew who the experts in the sector were. She was the one who introduced us, for instance, to Mary Galvin. She gave us the intelligence for what was going on in South Africa and regionally. She was, for instance, very aware of the policy decisions that governments were making in the Southern Africa region around decentralisation of power and responsibility to local communities, and understood that this was in fact what was being modelled in principle in South Africa. Although it wasn't successfully working in practice, there were lessons to be learned about decentralisation through connecting better with Zambia. She gave us the list of which duty-bearers to engage in roundtables, or to have included in certain consultations, if we wanted to be effectively influential.”

Oxfam Australia in South Africa: “In South Africa, Oxfam Australia responded to the AACES call for proposals for a multi-country WASH project, based on a recognised need among South African partners. The initial concept note was not particularly specific in detail since Oxfam had no previous experience in WASH programming in South Africa. Oxfam Great Britain in Zambia, however, had generated considerable experience in WASH under its previous ACWSI programme

that made provision for service delivery and hardware installation. Zambia became the second country in the multi-country proposal to AACES.

In South Africa, we really benefited from the Zambian experience in WASH at the next stage of design for the project. Zambia's mature experience in WASH through ACWSI really anchored the Design Note. They had learned what worked well and, importantly, also what not to do. Interestingly, Zambia was also feeling challenged about how to approach this new project and how to step beyond its previous experience. ACWSI had been strongly focussed on service delivery and hardware. AACES made them think about how best to be community-led, to do participation, and to integrate gender, disability, and child protection.

Ultimately, the Design Note looked quite different from the original concept note, and this was largely influenced by considering the practical experience of the Zambian partners.”

David Mwamba, WASH Programme Manager, Oxfam

GB in Zambia: “Apart from our implementing partners, we also had to draw on technical expertise from partners who could support specific work such as disability. We worked with Zambia Federation of Disability Organisations (ZAFOD) – an NGO umbrella organisation – and Zambia Agency for Persons with Disability (ZAPD), the latter a government agency. Implementing partners in the communities held the money and facilitated delivery of the programmes by those organisations, jointly planned for how this would happen in communities. Our overall approach was that the responsibility for carrying out the community work was on the community members themselves. The technical partners and implementing partners would train the community facilitators. As the community facilitators carry out their work, they are taking on board these messages on inclusion, on GBV, on child protection, on human rights, and on advocacy.

Our experience is showing that persons with disability themselves now feel more included in their community, generally, not only in AACES activities and this is, in part, due to increased awareness in communities of the value of those living with disabilities. But more importantly, there's higher awareness by those with disabilities themselves about their rights, about how to recognise when they feel discriminated against. They'll tell you 'now I know my rights, I know where to go to report discrimination, the chiefs are more aware of inclusion so there isn't as much discrimination from authorities at the local level'. There was also some demonstration where people with disabilities showed their ability to their communities: PPS gave some small loans to some persons with disabilities, and they started their own businesses. That sign of competence and independence has helped the community to see these people through a different light.

As the programme developed, the Partner Management meeting helped all the partners get together more regularly to coordinate the work together, hosted in a rotation by each partner, so everyone has a turn to host. Progressively, in 2014, we expanded the management meeting to include the WDCs. We are now agreed that the host of each Partner Management meeting takes responsibility to ensure representatives of the WDC are invited and participate in each meeting.”

Village Water Zambia: “We were not part of the original group of partners who started with Oxfam on AACES. We were recommended for inclusion in 2013 because we brought with us certain skills and expertise that were not there among the existing partners. We were WASH-specialists, and had worked for years in these communities doing hygiene promotion, training Village Hygiene & Sanitation Committees to coordinate WASH activities, training community members to maintain water and sanitation facilities, and delivering hardware solutions such as boreholes and latrines. We believed

in the programming strategy, that providing water alone was not enough to reduce disease but, combined with proper hygiene and sanitation, there could be as much as 80% decrease in preventable diseases.

And, AACES was a good fit for us. We shared many of the same beliefs and principles: that working in

partnership was important, but needed investment of time and energy to gain momentum and bear fruit; that participation by the community was the highest level of partnership; and that decision-making needed to lie with members of the community themselves.”

A PRECONDITION: We are committed to facilitative approaches, believing that when we become too directive, we lose the space for SERENDIPITY ('pleasant surprise'), for EMERGENCE (what parts of a system do together that they would not ordinarily do alone) and for INTEGRATION.

David Mwamba, WASH Programme Manager, Oxfam GB in Zambia: “We are all so used to traditional development programming, that tries idealistically to plan five years in advance what will happen and what should happen. We all become so confident in our logframes that we think we can build assurance in the planning through the over-specification of details. And if our plans are not detailed enough at the very beginning, we can be accused of not planning properly or professionally. But, how can we say we are running a community-led project when we have already made detailed plans that are prescriptive, predictable, and rely on our organisation to carry out its planning in order to achieve the results?”

We have been learning more and more about how to build assurance, not necessarily into the planning of detailed content or products, but instead into the process. If we expect that communities will be leading, and that they will be responding, then we can plan to work in ways that are participatory and inclusive and design our process to allow for that. I'm not saying that products and processes are mutually exclusive but facilitative organisations program for space – the unexpected, the unanticipated, the unpredicted – and give themselves space in their process to analyse and adapt

the content of their plans. That's the assurance for achieving desired outcomes in complex social realities.”

Village Water Zambia: “We've learned more and more over the years of participating with communities – and especially through AACES – of the importance of thinking in integrated ways. We are specialists in WASH, but we've adapted to do things much more holistically in our work. We didn't always work this way; when we started, for instance, we focussed only on villages. Then we realised that we needed to expand our engagement to connect multiple spheres of influence, where people interact. So we started to think about what it meant to integrate WASH with churches, or with schools. From there we saw how important it was to think about WASH in relation to, for instance, access to education and from there to broader issues of child safety and children's rights.

We've had a history of being technicians and educators, deliverers. It made us secure and comfortable in what we knew. AACES was a disruptor of that paradigm. It made us brave enough to allow the program to avoid tangible quick-win scenarios too early on; we had, instead, some freedom, some space for real community

engagement, just to talk with people, without the pressure of immediately demonstrating “real” results.”

Village Water Zambia: “Because we’ve been thinking deliberately in more integrated ways, we’ve realised that it is important to have a multi-strategy approach to the work, not always just one simple straight line.

We’ve learned to embrace a kind of complexity in our approaches, to give proper space and time for real analysis of issues and situations. This has helped us avoid superficial responses that cannot achieve real impact, although in the short term they accomplish a few activities that feel satisfying to us, but don’t really have any lasting effect in the communities.”



1

We build our own understanding of the context: the environment for and experience of engagement around an issue. We review (What do policies say? What actions have already taken place?) and analyse implications (What do those policies and practices mean?).

OAU: “The call for proposals for AACES required the Oxfam Australia in South Africa team to implement WASH through a multi-country project. We recognised the opportunity to include Oxfam Great Britain in Zambia as the second country. They had previous experience in WASH work that would help significantly strengthen the AACES project implementation.

Zambia’s previous experience through the ACWSI programme was exclusively hardware and service-delivery: borehole rehabilitation, sinking boreholes, and installing latrines. In that time, they’d learned many lessons about the process of implementing a WASH process with communities. Zambia’s prior experience afforded them a sound understanding of their local context – a more maturely developed insight than was available to the South Africa team at the start of the AACES process. They had also realised that delivering WASH-hardware was the easiest part of the work, but was rendered under-effective if not coupled with matching ‘software’: capacity-building; integration of water, sanitation and hygiene into broader issues of life; and facilitative approaches to promote full community participation and greater community development.

South African partners were only starting out with WASH, and were eager to apply a hardware-approach: rainwater harvesting, boreholes and pumps. The Zambian experience offered a helpful contrast through which to understand the importance of engagement with communities, and the sustainability implications of working with WASH through an approach that was

focussed too strongly on service-delivery at the early stages of implementation.”

OAU: “We built our understanding about water and sanitation issues from our partners’ experience. Prior to AACES and a focus on WASH, water kept being flagged by those partners as an issue that had different implications for the development work they were doing with communities. We realised it was an issue, but didn’t know enough to do anything about it. In 2010, we brought together partners to talk about it and realised it was a viable and legitimate issue for advocacy, around access to water and sanitation, and for dealing with the systemic issues that limited such access to citizens. In the Umkhanyakude district where many of our partners worked in South Africa, we recognised that there were political challenges contributing to water access, and issues around the provincial budget and service-delivery of water services.”

OAU: “AACES required us to think in an integrated way, across multiple themes, and to not only see WASH as a single, linear, literal issue. The project requirements forced us to think more broadly about the effect of water and sanitation, or the implications of limited access. We quickly realised that there were intersections with issues like disability and child protection, and that if we were serious about working with WASH at community level, these were necessary intersections to engage with.”

David Mwamba, WASH Programme Manager, Oxfam GB in Zambia: “When we were ending ACWSI, we already had some experience that we were working from. In developing AACES we got together all the partners we were working with under ACWSI – the traditional leaders, the government departments (Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, municipal and district councils), KZF and PPS – to ask what the new program should focus on. In our new project development, we had a built-in period between December 2010 to March 2011, with a budget, to do consultation with our

stakeholders in order to better understand the context, and what needed to be done to move forward. We knew we needed to build an understanding of what was needed by everybody who was interested in Water and Sanitation programming at that time. In 2012, we used a baseline methodology – Participatory Rural Appraisal – to assist the communities to identify the broader development challenges in their communities, to analyse them, and start thinking what they might do to address those challenges, of which AACES might only address some parts.”

We generate thinking about potential impacts, and identify (a) opportunities for influence and (b) mechanisms for influence. We review and conduct research to test, to deepen and to verify our understanding of the issue.

In 2010, an opportunity arose from AusAID through a request for proposals inviting organisations to submit concept notes to do work promoting water, sanitation and hygiene in Southern Africa. Oxfam Australia in South Africa realised this opportunity could strategically help address the issue of water that had been a recurring subject emerging among its community-based partner organisations in their work with livelihoods in South Africa.

OAU: “Oxfam Australia in South Africa and Oxfam Great Britain in Zambia worked together through a sequence of consultative processes to develop intelligence on which to base our WASH strategy for AACES. We generated a Concept Note to respond to the opportunity for WASH work through the AACES mechanism, focussed around advocacy, implementation of technical WASH interventions, and community engagement, all delivered through our community-based partner organisations.

Following the Concept Note, we commissioned a Contextual Analysis. Mary Galvin conducted a scoping exercise to explore the intersections of WASH with other sectors like food security, health, HIV and AIDS, and child protection in South Africa. Stelios Comninos conducted a Literature Review and field visits with Oxfam GB and partners in Zambia, generating lessons around good practice in WASH implementation, and identifying broad areas of focus communities and partners needed to work on in the new program. He found, most notably, that Oxfam should not be a direct implementer of WASH in Zambia – as they had been in ACWSI – but instead build the capacity of community-level

organisations to deliver programs and services. Collectively, these pieces of work provided data on which to base a comprehensive Design Document, detailing the approach for implementing the five-year project. The design document was crafted collaboratively by the Oxfam teams, and supported by contributions from technical WASH experts and local partners.”

Urvarshi Rajcoomar, OAU: “AACES implementation had begun; the project was underway. South African partners were already doing quite a bit of work on WASH. Based on their own reflections, it became evident that they needed to do more than installation of hardware. They needed to do more influencing work. Hardware-provision was necessary and useful to communities in the immediate, but the benefits were ultimately unsustainable beyond the limited life of the project. There was the danger that communities would come to view local partner organisations as substitute duty-bearers, responsible for the continued provision of services that should be the responsibility of the state. Partners knew they needed to do this influencing work, but were unclear how or where to focus their interventions. Likewise, we as Oxfam Australia in South Africa were uncertain how best to approach the advocacy component within AACES, and what kind of support we needed to provide to partners to enhance their influencing capacity.

That’s when Matthew Phillips (Oxfam Australia, Melbourne) and I decided to visit all AACES partners, and a few other organisations within the WASH sector, to get a better sense of what the advocacy issues within

WASH might be, and where our partners might best fit into this. We did a series of interviews, and it became very clear from partners' experience that sanitation was the dominant concern. Some were talking about sanitation in households; some were talking about sanitation in schools.

We started having conversations with other organisations who were doing similar work on sanitation in the WASH sector to get a sense of where the debates were, and where the opportunities were to engage government and to link up with other national civil society organisations. In 2014, we wrote up an Influencing Strategy on Sanitation in Schools, presented in draft form for discussion with partners, who reached agreement around where the influencing focus needed to be.

Within Oxfam, we operationalised the strategy by identifying three levels of action to address sanitation in schools: providing technical support and capacity building to partners to enhance their contextually-driven influencing work; linking up local level partners with the national debates and thinking around sanitation in schools; and generating thinking within Oxfam through research that included a study on menstrual management in schools."

Wendy Lubbee, OAU: "OneVoice, one of the South African AACES partners, worked in schools offering life skills education, and started to get involved in WASH programming at schools. They found that girls were coming to school without access to feminine hygiene products. At the time, there was a lot of publicity circulating – almost propaganda – around the effects of female sanitation on girls at schools, but not based on any real studies. We wanted to generate statistical evidence, and to be able to better inform OneVoice on strategies that answered the most immediate and most essential needs in the best ways. We offered to

commission some research in schools where OneVoice operated, and expanded the scope to include a few other schools, hoping to generate better intelligence around the most effective services that could be offered to girls that were acceptable, appropriate and relevant to their needs. In June 2014, Oxfam Australia in South Africa contracted Moeti Kgware to do a piece of research on menstrual management.

Meanwhile, in Zambia, the government had made a policy decision to utilise CLTS as their approach for rolling out sanitation in the country. We were advised by our DFAT Technical Advisor on WASH that South Africa might be considering a similar approach. There was a lot of information out there on CLTS, but it was not particularly critical in its analysis, only promoting the aspects of CLTS that worked well. We were advised that if we did some very good research, it could be useful to the sector and be useful to funders who might otherwise see CLTS as being the only way to do sanitation. For instance, UNICEF and World Bank and other funders seemed to strongly support the CLTS approach, largely because it seemed to be the only approach. We were looking for intelligence that would benefit not only Oxfam's work in sanitation, but also that of similar intermediary organisations. When Mary Galvin did the research (May 2013), she connected with program implementers in, for instance, World Vision, Action Aid, Water Aid, Concern Universal, and involved other Oxfam offices implementing WASH. She covered experiences from South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and Malawi. All of these countries were implementing CLTS approaches. Research suggested that where it worked, CLTS was not being implemented in its purest form – simply arrive, triggering, leaving without giving support. Instead, people were using hybrid approaches (triggering, not leaving, helping communities to take next steps, accompanying). That finding significantly informed a choice for Oxfam about implementing an approach to WASH through a hybrid-CLTS strategy."

We transfer our learning into materials that expand public access to the issue: simplified language and translation that is useful for education and information-sharing. We test these materials for efficacy and adapt accordingly.

OAU: “In South Africa, during the first year of AACES implementation, 2011, we were building our own knowledge base around WASH. This involved the development of a number of materials for use by partners in their programming. It was important that these materials reflect a broader, more integrated approach to WASH that was more than simply water, hygiene and sanitation. We also recognised the fact that a lot of other materials had been generated in the WASH sector. We didn’t want to duplicate what was already out there. We invited Mary Galvin of Umphilo WaManzi to develop an inventory – a catalogue of sorts – of existing WASH materials that had been developed by international NGOs, country-based interventions and governments. We soon realised that, even though there were many materials available, they did not reflect how we were coming to think about an integrated approach to WASH. They didn’t, for instance, consider the intersection between water and sanitation and early childhood development. Or water and hygiene and home-based care. These were all thematic areas in which our partners were working before WASH came into the picture.

We invited partners in these other thematic areas to use what was available through the inventory and tailor

it for their thematic areas. Then, from their own experience of integration, to develop curricula that explored the intersection of WASH with other sectors.

As a result, materials developed from 2011 included:

1. Mary Galvin’s Inventory, mapping of other WASH materials: “*Mapping of Existing Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Materials and Identification of Gaps in WASH Messaging for Oxfam Partners, funded by the Australia Africa Community Engagement Scheme (AACES)*”.
2. A WASH and ECD curriculum, developed by TREE.
3. A WASH and HBC curriculum, developed by TREE with support from HAPG and Woza Moya.
4. A WASH and Youth curriculum, including a focus on Menstrual Management in Schools, developed by TREE with inputs from OneVoice.
5. A technical training manual for WASH hardware maintenance - changing filters, repairing pumps, replacing washers, etc. - developed by Ka-Lethabo.
6. A number of research documents, including a study on Menstrual Management in Schools (Kgware) and a critical analysis of CLTS (Galvin).”

Oxfam Australia in South Africa, through the Joint Oxfam HIV and AIDS Program (JOHAP) commencing in 1998, made a commitment through its strategic documents to strengthen civil society to effectively respond to HIV. The model was to work with local organisations at a community level, as partners in response, as these organisations were already responding through a visible presence in communities, and working directly with those most affected by the issue. Oxfam respected these partners' sound understanding of the local context that enabled them to design programmes relevant and appropriate to the needs of the communities they served.

From 2008, when partners in South Africa first started surfacing concerns about water as a development issue, Oxfam Australia in South Africa did not have sufficient experience or expertise to deliver technical interventions in relation to water or sanitation. The only way to respond responsibly around the issue from that early stage was to work through local partners, supporting them through capacity-building, resourcing, linking and convening to take steps most appropriate to their community context, and to bring that new knowledge back into the partnership.

Similarly, in Zambia, based on experience from the ACWSI project, and the findings of project evaluations, contextual analyses (Comminos) and research (Galvin), Oxfam GB in Zambia made the strategic choice to work exclusively through community-based partners, without taking on a direct service-delivery role as they had previously done through ACWSI.

In South Africa, in 2011, Oxfam Australia commissioned LIMA as a technical resource partner. LIMA moved between WASH implementing partners, training in

and co-facilitating Participatory Rural Appraisal processes with local communities prior to the activation of a full WASH process by each community-based partner. They collected the data, including a baseline survey, and together with the local NGOs and communities, identified priorities and opportunities for WASH-programming.

In Zambia, Participatory Rural Appraisal was used to conduct baseline surveys. PPS facilitated the PRA process in Mongu District, and worked together with KZF in Luampa and Kaoma Districts.

TREE is an organisation based in Durban working in ECD. Its core focus is training and development of ECD practitioners, and the development of resource materials for use in ECD programming. Tree was brought on through Oxfam Australia in South Africa to support South African partners to develop their own curricula, resources and materials for packaging WASH information, and for integrating WASH into their respective thematic areas of activity.

OAU: "Equal Education is an advocacy organisation operating at national level in South Africa, and focusing on the right to education. By 2011, Equal Education was already spearheading a national campaign on schools' norms and standards within the Department of Education. The campaign focussed on, among other things, access to basic services such as water, sanitation and hygiene in public schools in order to improve the quality of basic education.

In 2015, Oxfam Australia in South Africa forged a strategic partnership with Equal Education to serve as a technical resource, assisting AACES partners to build

their knowledge base about the norms and standards, and to work with those partners involved in implementing advocacy interventions in schools around the issue of sanitation. Equal Education also served as a bridge to link local experience generated by ACCES partners to the broader national campaign.

At the same time, Oxfam Australia in South Africa directly supported the WASH-related advocacy activities of Equal Education in driving the Norms and Standards campaign, simultaneously supporting the organisation to grow its footprint in KZN where many of the other AACES partners conducted their work. This contributed to a continuity of relationships and programming beyond the lifespan of the AACES project.”

Throughout the course of the AACES programme, Oxfam consciously supported partners to gain exposure and build greater capacity and technical literacy around WASH. These included:

1. In 2013, representatives of Fancy Stitch, Woza Moya and Tholulwazi Uzivikele (TU) were supported to participate in the Durban Toilet Conference where they were exposed to a range of alternative sanitation systems. Fancy Stitch Director, Maryna, went home after the conference and implemented the EnviroLoo concept at her centre, establishing it as a demonstration in her community, and making it available for use by the public in a community with no public lavatories. She then set about developing a strategy to influence the municipality to implement EnviroLoos at scale in multiple locations in Ingwavuma. Woza Moya and TU, similarly, requested EnviroLoos for their respective centres.
2. In 2014, representatives of Save the Children KZN, Woza Moya, and a number of Zambia-based CBO partners, joined Oxfam in attending the Brisbane WASH Conference in 2014 in Australia. Members of this delegation presented a paper on Oxfam’s experience with AACES and WASH. The full team participated in a CLTS roundtable side event, presenting their findings in South Africa and Zambia and the conclusions emerging from various research pieces with the aim to influence proponents of the pure-CLTS approach present at the conference.
3. In 2014, the Democracy Development Program (DDP), a South African organisation focussing on democracy training and advocacy capacity-building hosted a conference. Oxfam supported Woza Moya and OneVoice to participate.
4. In 2015, representatives of TU, Woza Moya and select Zambian partners were supported to participate in the Gender and WASH Conference for Africa, in East London, South Africa.
5. In 2015, Oxfam supported a representative of CREATE to participate in the M&E Conference for WASH in Melbourne, Australia, enabling a specialist resource partner with technical expertise in disability-inclusion to co-present a case study on “Disability inclusion and monitoring, evaluation and learning with partners of Oxfam in South Africa”. They also attended a Disability workshop with other Oxfam funded partners from Asia-Pacific to share their experience of the integration of disability into WASH programming by AACES partners and to learn from other organisations who were making similar attempts to integrate disability.

We expand community participation processes to include and connect civil society organisations³ to the issue, and to communities responding around that issue.

David Mwamba, WASH Programme Manager, Oxfam GB in Zambia: “Ward Development Committees (WDCs) are an initiative of the government as part of its strategy to decentralise authority and responsibility to local levels of society. And, while that idea existed on paper, no WDCs had been implemented because the local councils had no resources to do the public participation work needed to get people ready to engage⁴. Oxfam GB in Zambia approached the Mongu Municipal Council, offering to support the process with resources to conduct pre-election sensitisation, to conduct voter registration, to conduct WDC elections, and to support the operationalisation of a community-elected WDC. The local council agreed. As part of the AACES project, these Ward Committees, as they formed, were responsible for generating with the community Ward Plans that followed on from the Participatory Rural Appraisal processes.

By 2013, in Imalyo Ward, the World Bank was establishing the Pilot Project for Climate Resilience (PPCR). We advised the Permanent Secretary’s office, particularly the Chief Planner, and the program manager for the PPCR project to recruit PPS for the implementation of the project in Imalyo, so as not confuse the community with duplication of processes and approaches and organisational reference points. Fortunately, they agreed.

You see, we had been recognised and appreciated for our planning approach. Even though we were working with the communities, we were not only thinking about bottom-up approaches. But, we were deliberately looking for an intersection between the community priorities and government priorities and we used the provincial planning unit to advise the communities on the government priorities during different stages of community consultation. Representatives of the Planning Unit participated directly in the process. This made it easier for me later to access that level of government administration. They knew me, and more importantly, they knew what was

happening with the other programme because they’d been part of it.

We also asked them to consider recognising the work that had been done through the Participatory Rural Appraisals, the Ward Plans and the establishment of the Ward Development Committees. They received the plans, and gave feedback that they were impressed with the work already done. It seems we were ahead of them, as they still had to do specific surveys in line with their own government M&E. After they had completed those surveys, I looked at what came out – and it was exactly what came out in the Ward Plans. The community showed that it knew things, even before the technical people knew things.

During the implementation of the PPCR, Natango community in Imalyo ward successfully managed its own community grant of \$50 000 (US), completing all activities that included a 20km canal clearing project, with no audit issues. One of the activities was to clear a canal, which the community achieved, and it is still the only canal that is useful out of all the others supported. Imalyo was recognised as outperforming all other wards. You see that community had elected one of the young ladies trained in construction through AACES to manage the grant, and she really did very well. She is the only one who has been invited twice to the World Bank organised review meetings to share the experiences of that community.

This has now so influenced the World Bank that it has changed the guidelines for the PPCR to insist on government processes for establishing WDCs and facilitating Ward Development plans as conditions before moving to the next stage where they will access more support. Imalyo can now progress to that next stage – managing a much bigger grant of \$200 000 (US) – the only ward moving to that stage.”

David Mwamba, WASH Programme Manager, Oxfam GB in Zambia: “In Zambia, Oxfam saw our role to act as a link that facilitated connection between communities and public office bearers.”

OAU: “At the AACES Partners’ Reflection Meeting in Livingstone (2013), part of the process allowed partners to think about the previous year’s work and to design what the core interest or focus might be for the next year. At the meeting, the Zambian team reflected that they were very much into the space where they were working alongside government. Everything they did was in collaboration or in consultation with the state. This was very different to the South African partners, a fact that became so obvious that it began to dominate the Livingstone meeting, and switched the focus of the reflection to the question of sustainability. Partners considered how the gains from AACES would be sustained unless responsibilities for WASH became more embedded in government.

The Zambian team seemed very focussed at that stage on their influencing work. The core reason why Zambia was choosing to work that way was that they knew they weren’t going to be around for a long period of time. That someone else – in their case, government – was going to have to come in afterwards and pick up the work.

The South African partners were caused to reflect that if they were to shut office and close their doors, there was no one positioned to pick up from them. They realised that something important was missing from their work and that, by focussing solely on substitutionary service provision on behalf of government they were setting themselves up as de facto duty-bearers in place

of the state. At this point, South African partners realised that service-delivery was not enough. They needed to locate their work more strongly within a rights-based framework.

The meeting agenda gave way to a mapping exercise with both South African and Zambian partners, each identifying their present influencing work, their advocacy footprint, their approach, their activities, and their strategy. Partners seemed more comfortable with the ‘light’ influencing at community level: health-promotion and education, WASH awareness raising, consciousness-raising around health and rights (access to water), and building alliances with other civil society organisations (although these alliances clustered around thematic program work, not influencing). But, in particular, South African partners were not doing much work around policy analysis and engagement. Partners were not yet at that space.

A call emerged from the partners for capacity enhancement to be more focussed in terms of influencing work and to help unpack questions of sustainability in detail.”

OAU: “South African AACES partners self-organised by the end of 2012, following the Oxfam Voices Conference, and formalised their partnership through establishing a peer-based community of practice, supported through Oxfam with the resources to convene from time to time as “The WASH Group”. The forum provided a platform for sharing and learning between the partners, and led to inter-organisational collaboration, linking service delivery to policy-influence.

One such collaboration took shape between LIMA and Save the Children. LIMA is a technical hardware specialist in WASH who did not at the time see their role

as being involved in advocacy. At the same time, Save The Children was concerned about the number of ECD facilities under threat of closure. These facilities were struggling to adequately modify their infrastructure to comply with minimum building regulations that would qualify them as a safe, enabling environment for child-care. Some of these requirements related to access to sanitation, having a sufficient number of toilets for the number of children at the facility. Many of the unsubsidised ECD facilities found these regulations quite unachievable. Added to this there was a lack of water in many of these rural communities and the pit latrines had proved fatal to more than one young child.

LIMA reviewed its position on advocacy, and recognised the opportunity to collaborate with Save the Children, other ECD practitioners and parents. LIMA had developed an alternative sanitation solution that it wanted to propose to the state, but needed a way to test the infrastructure to validate and verify it. The WASH Group provided a way for LIMA and Save the Children to work together.

In the period between 2014 and 2015, LIMA and Save the Children jointly conceptualised a way of working where each would tap into the strengths, skills and expertise of the other. LIMA would focus on design and infrastructure. Save the Children was positioned to test the solution for appropriateness and relevance through its network of associated facilities. It is envisaged that, together, these partners can use their findings to lobby government based on the LIMA model to show an approach that satisfies the requirements without needing to conform to exacting, stringent, unachievable policy standards. By early 2016, this influencing ambition is an ongoing work in progress.”

David Mwamba, WASH Programme Manager, Oxfam GB in Zambia: “Between 2012 and 2013, after spending significant time in consultation with communities, we

started looking at what needed to be delivered and we realised that PPS, our first AACES implementing partner, did not have all the capacity to deliver the full range of outcomes that we needed from the programme. So we started exploring partnerships with other NGOs that would strengthen the programme. When we realised that we could link with the national campaign on GBV, we thought that fitted really well with our objective on reducing gender inequalities. We had to seek out an organisation that had experience in gender, so we brought in the YWCA Western Province. Oxfam was already working with the parent-organisation in Lusaka that was leading the national campaign, ‘I Care About Her’. On the WASH construction side, we brought in Village Water Zambia. On Child Protection, we realised that PPS had no capacity, but it was also already someone else’s mandate – the police already had this unit – so we thought it would be better for PPS to link with the Child Protection Unit of the Zambian Police Service to do this work of Child Protection. PPS worked to support the officers of the Zambian Police Service to go and deliver the process of Child Protection education. We didn’t even have to develop materials. The police already had the materials.”

PPS: “For us at PPS, the AACES project really added value. As an old organisation working for twenty years in Western Province, we had experience to network ourselves with many partners and government, but AACES connected us to other stakeholders who had skills to reach populations with a capacity that did not exist in PPS. The approach to partnership-building in the project itself even helped the organisation to improve that ability to network. We realised as an organisation that for us to achieve, we needed to involve others. It enabled us to interact and exchange ideas with other international organisations; we gained a lot of experience that we are using now.

The project is quite different to other projects where there are many partners. Yes, there are a lot of partner organisations, but we are not working in isolation. We have been brought together in a way that has encouraged transparency. One would expect there would be tension and fireworks, but instead we are working like a family, even though we are each working within our own remits and areas of expertise.”

Village Water Zambia: “AACES gave us the opportunity to extend our networks and to expand the scope and

scale of our work, and the depth. It seemed that, before, we were swimming in familiar streams, but stayed on the surface. It was like we were only ever aware of small fish there on the surface, when there could have been a whale underneath.

We’ve found all these other partners, and the community voices are really coming up strongly, and we’re now able to speak with a greater magnified voice when we are speaking to decision makers at policy level. Through AACES, for instance, we are championing the redesign of latrines that are developed and rolled out by government. This is a big ambition, but I am not scared.”

OAU: “We knew quite early on that we wanted to make WASH a more central development issue in civil society, since access to water was such a far-reaching issue with many implications in many sectors. This meant that WASH-thinking needed to reach beyond those partners who were directly connected to the AACES project. And so we looked to our network of partners and peer organisations, trying to bring them closer to WASH concepts by facilitating their participation in opportunities outside of their typical program areas. Then we watched, not too much more than informally, to see how any of these concepts might be slowly integrating into non-AACES, non-WASH organisations.

There were many non-AACES partner organisations concerned about water issues linked to their core work that, over the course of the project, were invited to participate in AACES Reflection and Learning Events, including:

1. CHOICE, an HIV organisation focussing on HBC work, particularly looking at training HBC workers through a specific curriculum.
2. TREE, who began incorporating WASH content into its own core work, after working with AACES partners on curricula and resource material development.
3. PACSA, a human and civil rights organisation.
4. HAPG, an HIV and AIDS prevention, care and treatment organisation.
5. KRCC, an organisation working around gender norms, confronting gender stereotypes, and economic empowerment for women.
6. RSS, Refugee Social Services, working in inner city Durban with the refugee community.

We simply asked these partners to share their progress in reports from time to time, and occasionally present on their work at AACES Learning Events and non-AACES learning events. We acknowledged that WASH work was also happening by non-AACES partners – a great deal of work being done – and if integration was a core component of the way we programmed, they needed to be included in various capacity-building and learning opportunities.

While Oxfam can't claim responsibility for the increased integration of WASH, we have noticed a strengthening of the WASH-concepts across multiple sectors represented by our partner organisations.

We noticed that CHOICE expanded from curriculum development for HBC work where WASH was mainstreamed to more assertively taking initiative to facilitate community dialogues – creating the space for communities to have discussion around developmental issues, using WASH as an entry point to other issues.

We noticed that PACSA, working around the issue of affordability of electricity in the Msunduzi area, formed a WASH committee with members of a community looking at access to water, affordability issues and linked it to their analysis of affordability in general.

We noticed that TREE expanded from being a curriculum development and training organisation for ECD practitioners to more actively embrace opportunities for influence. Because of the nature of their work, TREE has a good relationship with government with potential to influence. They recognised that advocacy was actually

a core component of their work, and started to look at newly developed policies for ECD. They analysed the policy from a WASH perspective, which they'd never done before, making recommendations and proposing alternatives to government about what WASH facilities

should look like in unsubsidised ECD facilities. They even held a workshop where they invited government and other peer organisations in the ECD sector, and used that forum to build alliances to address key gaps in the policy.”

We periodically review consultation models and public participation approaches to improve efficacy, together with partners.

OAU: “In the months following the AACES Partners Reflection meeting in Livingstone (2013), Oxfam Australia commissioned the support of a consultant, Davine Thaw, to work with South African AACES partners to reflect on their programming and influencing work, and work with them to get it more focussed at achieving strategic outcomes. It wasn’t that they weren’t doing anything, it just became evident from the mapping exercise at the Livingstone meeting that their influencing work was ad hoc, random, sometimes very broad and non-specific with the hope that it might hit a target. Davine would support the partners to become more strategic around what they wanted to influence, who they needed to target, and to have a written plan for influencing.

Davine convened a centralised workshop for all South African partners in one space over a number of days. During those days, she started to focus very much on people-centred advocacy because it has a stronger sustainability component and links to the issues emerging from the Livingstone meeting, challenging participants to think about ‘How do you invest in a certain group of individuals and communities so that when you leave, the work continues beyond the life of your project? How do you do work that is local, contextually appropriate, and short-term achievable, aiming for small wins while capacity and confidence is being developed?’ This reflection was really key. Partners went back and had discussions with their program and management teams, and submitted an influencing strategy and plan – embedded in the context of their existing work and core business, not new strategies – to be more focussed.

After the workshop, Davine worked on an individual basis with each partner organisation to mentor and support the construction/design of their advocacy plans. For TU, this was about influencing around WASH in the context of schools and education. For Woza Moya, it was looking at modelling sustainable school infrastructure for WASH

in low-resource environments. For Save the Children, it was working to build the capacity of crèche forums to engage with public officials around WASH-service provision to ECD facilities. For LIMA, a service provider already positioned to deliver WASH infrastructure on behalf of government, it was about influencing government with more cost-effective solutions for WASH.

Partners who submitted advocacy plans and proceeded with roll-out had the opportunity to test their roll-out and influencing approaches, and review it after 6 months at a joint reflection and learning workshop.

In 2015, Oxfam Australia in South Africa commissioned a small study into its NHI Accountability Project, implemented in three provinces in South Africa between 2011 and 2013. The study explored the approaches used by three community-based partner organisations to facilitate community consultation around the developing National Health Insurance legislation. What surfaced was an articulated Theory of Change for promoting active civic engagement and accountability through public participation, and a set of provisional steps, practices and principles for intermediary organisations and community-based organisations keen to work with communities to stimulate their responsiveness towards achieving their own development outcomes.

Developed into a publication – “*Facilitating Civic Engagement through Consultation: Learning from local communities through the NHI Accountability Project in South Africa*” – the study is the first in a series of documents seeking to learn from the experience of partner organisations and communities. The analysis will contribute towards a body of evidence around approaches for strengthening public participation, active citizenship, civic engagement and community initiative, and the disposition needed by organisations who wish to work closely and responsibly with communities.”

We synthesise community input, and facilitate a way for it to inform our cumulative policy-analysis, practice and programming.

Urvarshi Rajcoomar, OAU: “Equal Education is an advocacy organisation working at national level in South Africa, with a focus on the right to education. They were already working on the issue of sanitation in schools and were brought on board to work with AACES partners to mentor them in influencing work, and to be a reference organisation for advocacy around WASH. The partnership offered partners an opportunity for exposure and to be stimulated by an organisation more experienced in the issue, and a way to participate in the national campaign being spearheaded by Equal Education at that time.

But the partnership was not only one-way. It also offered Equal Education a bridge into local experience and evidence, as this was being generated through the work of the AACES partners in local schools and communities in their respective locations, that was useful to inform higher-level advocacy to policy and decision-makers.

Learning from practice and reflecting on the experience generated at organisational and community levels was an explicit element of the AACES project. Inter-organisational sharing was built into the project design from inception and provided for through – among other activities – a series of AACES Partner Learning and Sharing Events.”

As described in the AACES mid-term review document: “Objective five of the Oxfam AACES WASH programme is to document and share learning, and thereby inform policy, public engagement and programme development and growth. Space has been created for exchanging ideas, sharing experiences, reflecting on progress and practice, and bringing in technical consultants and innovative practices, in order for partners to learn,

share and adapt ideas in their programmes. These have taken the form of annual reflections, training and exchange and site visits between partners. Partners indicate that these spaces are incredibly valuable and have added enormous benefit to the growth and development of themselves, their organisations and the programmes.” (Roper, 2014)

OAU: “We wanted to expose our different partner organisations to the way participation happens in communities so they could be provoked, could reflect, and then apply those principles to their own practice. We didn’t simply want to replicate activities; we were interested that partners learn about the approach for participation and integration. Our strategy was to always base various workshops and gatherings in different areas so that exchange visits and field visits could be easily tagged on and partners could learn directly from getting into a community setting, not only through the theory of a workshop environment.”

David Mwamba, WASH Programme Manager, Oxfam GB in Zambia: “In 2014, we began to link strongly with the NGO-WASH Forum but that was a limited place for us to share our experience. People were getting confused by us and our approach. They were specialists, and struggled to relate to the more broadly integrated approach. They couldn’t see the relevance of child protection, of disability, etc. But, even despite this, we were still seen as legitimate because we could also share stories on the traditional WASH outcomes. And in 2015, Oxfam was elected the Chair of that Forum.”

We felt limited in our ability to relate and influence. Time was too short. We were still generating experience and evidence by the time we found our way into the national level stage. Engagement in robust advocacy at this forum level felt premature. We were just getting into a space where we could see concrete outcomes and verifiable approaches. We couldn't influence the thinking as much as we'd like – on the issues of integration – because the evidence was still emerging. For instance, Water Aid was very strong about disability, but even there we felt their way of thinking was too narrow (e.g. if you create a toilet with a ramp, then we

have done disability). It didn't help people create a full understanding of rights, or what comprehensive disability-inclusiveness meant when integrated into WASH. It wasn't asking about participation or about inclusion of communities in the process itself. The process and the product, both, need to be integrated, not only the product.

On traditional WASH issues, we could influence some things easily and led debate around manual drilling, around more allocation of money to WASH, on decentralisation of power and action at the local level.

Effectively, we come full-circle. We filter new learning back into the process to better understand the context, and deepen analysis by both organisations and communities alike.

AACES has generated a substantial bank of learning around WASH programming in particular, as well as broader principles of participatory development and civic accountability. Much of this learning has been analysed, interpreted and documented over the course of the project, captured in a variety of forms available for use as knowledge products. These, in turn, have provided evidence and intelligence that have been useful for programme, policy and process adaptation over the course of the project itself, and have continued potential benefit to inform future choices for design, approach and influencing work.

A few examples include:

1. Mary Galvin's study on CLTS – "*Addressing Southern Africa's Sanitation Challenges through Community-led Total Sanitation*" – the findings of which were presented jointly with AACES partners at the Melbourne WASH Conference (2013), and at a CLTS Roundtable event (2013) to delegates drawn from national and local government, civil society organisations and academia across several Southern African countries.
2. Moeti Kgare's study on Menstrual Management in Schools (2015), contributing towards, among other platforms, the campaign around National Norms and Standards in Schools, and access to adequate sanitation.
3. The contextual analyses of South Africa and Zambia's water, sanitation and hygiene context to inform the early design stage of Oxfam's AACES program offer, developed by Mary Galvin and Stelios Comninou of Umphilo waManzi.
4. The mid-term and end-term reviews of the Oxfam AACES project, prepared by Margaret Roper, in 2014 and 2016, respectively, exploring questions around effectiveness, sustainability, rights-based programming, and integration, while surfacing critical learning around approach and design.
5. Two *Value For Money* analyses prepared by Michelle Besley of Pamodzi Consulting as part of an assessment exercise for DFAT around AACES (2014 and 2015, respectively) and to develop a value-for-money model that made sense for Oxfam. Through the process, Oxfam has been able to articulate that value needs to be reflected, not only in nominal cost-benefit terms based in direct services supplied to a specific number of beneficiaries, but rather value also needed to reflect intangible effects, such as empowerment, increased equity, increased social capital of individuals and communities, and improved capacity of participating communities and organisations.
6. *Most Significant Change* (MSC) stories (2016) developed directly by community members and community-based organisations who were, themselves, the subject of action and implementation taking place through AACES.
7. Ilse Wilson's report "*Learning from AACES and Oxfam WASH approaches in Zambia*" (2013) reviewed the Zambian approaches adopted in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the AACES programme in that country, reflecting on the complementary roles of government, NGOs, communities; on the methodologies that contribute towards empowerment, awareness of vulnerability, participation, and change in behaviour; and on sustainability, influencing and accountability.



COMPONENT 3

PRACTICES

for CBOs

Community-based organisations (CBOs) work directly within specific local communities, contributing to transformation by delivering programmes and services that meet the development, health and justice needs of people in the places where they live.

For the AACES WASH process, Oxfam in South Africa and Zambia supported a large number of CBO partners: In South Africa - Fancy Stitch, Woza Moya, Save the Children, LIMA, OneVoice, MDIC, Tholulwazi Uzivikele; In Zambia - PPS, KZF, Village Water Zambia.

In the preceding section of this publication, the work of an intermediary organisation was described through a series of STEPS that contribute progressively to active civic engagement by communities and civil society organisations.

One such step (STEP 4) is supporting local partners to facilitate consultation and public participation that lead to expressions of integrated community response across a range of issues at local level.

Intermediary organisations and community-based organisations are different in function. Although they may subscribe to a similar vision and values about ways of working and principles of approach, it is important in this complementary development relationship that each retains those functions and behaviours that are its distinctive comparative advantage.

Volume One of this series of publications – *Facilitating Civic Engagement through Consultation: Learning from local communities through the NHI-Accountability Project in South Africa* – observed evidence of common practices and behaviours demonstrated by local CBO partners in the South African NHI-project. Many of these behaviours seemed consistent across the CBOs, despite the fact that they worked independently with

their communities, in different provinces across the country, with activities that were not centrally coordinated. Through comparative analysis of those NHI-implementing partners, eleven PRACTICES were isolated, suggesting these might be standard behaviours for community-based organisations seeking to work with communities in participatory, facilitative ways.

This second volume of the series extends the exploration of PRACTICE, focussing on those common behaviours evident in the approach and strategy of CBOs.

The Zambian CBO partners are the focus for this analysis of PRACTICE through the AACES programme, for a number of reasons:

- Since Volume One of the series (NHI) examined the practice of CBOs in a South African context, this second volume aims to compare practice from a different country context in order to compare, contrast and identify commonality in practice.
- From the inception of the AACES project, Zambian partners explicitly aimed to use WASH as an entry-point to promote civic engagement and accountability of duty-bearers, and to do so in a coordinated way between partners. WASH was a lever to stimulate broad-based community development, of which civic engagement and accountability of duty-bearers was a component. The aim was to make community members more development-orientated, and to see WASH as a pathway through which to explore a range of development issues. South African partners, by contrast, focussed more on incorporating elements of water, sanitation and hygiene programming into their existing localised programme and service-delivery work, with less explicit, intent on strategic influencing work until much later in their programme. This difference in original intention, design and practice makes Zambia an ideal point

of reference from which to extract comparable practices of approach for facilitating active civic engagement.

- **Zambian partners**, most clearly, employed a 'Twin Approach' to WASH through AACES: using the opportunity of infrastructure development to build the capacity of community members, to stimulate development enterprises, to sow the seeds for employment creation, and to develop and retain substantial capacity in communities. Opportunities for constructing latrines and drilling boreholes, for instance, were used to develop the capacity of women in construction and manual drilling. As David Nonde Mwamba, WASH Manager for Oxfam Great Britain in Zambia points out: "In a manner of speaking, we were killing two birds with one stone: building infrastructure and building people! This is an important feature of our approach in Zambia."

Zambia and South Africa differ considerably in socio-political and socioeconomic context, and the nature of the partner organisations is significantly different as well. Zambian partners evince a simpler level of organisational sophistication in terms of systems, technology and infrastructure. At the same time, however, they have a considerably longer history of working with the rural poor in the communities where AACES was implemented; had learned extensively from past experience how to approach communities from a more appreciative, collaborative perspective that went beyond service-delivery; evidenced a cooperative disposition towards the state without compromising their capacity to influence; and showed a keen sense of programmatic and developmental integration when working at the community level.

Much like the STEPS for Intermediary Organisations, the PRACTICES for community-based organisations answer the question 'What do we do?', and speak to components of the approach particular to this level of activity.

In Zambia, three WASH-partners contributed detailed experiences to this analysis of CBO practice:



People's Participation Services (PPS) is a local organisation established in 1996, operating in Western Province Zambia. It is the oldest Oxfam partner organisation in the province, working for the development of poor people, living in rural areas, with a special focus on marginalised women. Its responsive approach to a range of environmental conditions experienced by communities has expanded its scope of work to include development across HIV, health, agriculture, food security, livelihoods and WASH sectors.



Keepers Zambia Foundation (KZF) was established in 1996, responding to rising levels of poverty in peri-urban and rural households in Zambia. Operating at a national level across all provinces in the country, it implements community development programs in the areas of agriculture, environment and natural resources, water, sanitation and hygiene, enterprise development and disaster risk reduction.



Village Water Zambia was established as an indigenous organisation in 2007, primarily focussing on hygiene promotion, facilitating community action and behaviour change. Expanding into water-delivery work, the organisation complemented its preventative health programming with water and sanitation infrastructure, installing pumps and boreholes, digging wells and constructing latrines.



COMMON PRACTICES
















for CBOs facilitating participation and response





In working with local communities to design and facilitate a participatory process for response, CBOs should:









1. Have a strong, long-standing, quality **relationship with the community** being stimulated to participate in the process; invest time in trust-building and relationship-building.
2. Have a mature, current, vibrant practical **experience** in health programming, service-delivery, social development or social justice, or in **facilitation and participatory approaches** to development.
3. **Support leadership of the facilitation process from within the local community**, by team members drawn from that environment, and endorsed by that community.
4. **Invest in building relationships and trust** to ensure ownership, shared vision and common intention among communities and community leaders before activities and interventions begin.
5. Engage and involve community members as **early as possible, and as broadly as possible** in every aspect of the work, including planning, design, budgeting and influencing work.
6. Meet with **traditional community leaders** at the beginning of the process, to secure permission and endorsement, and to jointly plan strategy to engage the community.
7. Ask **inclusive questions** from the very beginning: who is not here? Who else needs to be here? Why are these people not here?
8. Work with the community to generate an **integrated picture of the physical and social environment**: talk together broadly about life, not immediately limiting to a narrow theme or issue.








9. Make after-activity reflection and **debriefing a routine behaviour** so that the facilitation team learns with and from the community, and can adapt the approach dynamically.
10. Stimulate reflection and engagement through **combination-approaches**. Mix consultation through large public gatherings with consultation through small focus-group discussions, and with home visits.
11. Consultation and stimulation happened through small **focus-group discussion**.
12. Facilitate consultation so that the **private environment** (small group; home) links to the **public environment** (neighbourhood gathering).
13. Stimulate depth of consultation through **door-to-door visits in the private homes** of community members, before focus-groups or community gatherings.
14. Facilitate **dialogue between community members, with each other**, not primarily directed towards the community-based organisation.
15. Stimulate reflection and dialogue from a **personal, affective point of reference** instead of cold facts. Let households and communities feel what the issue would mean for them.
16. See their role as being **development facilitators**, not expert implementers.
17. Work through a facilitative bottom-up approach with communities. Work through a similar approach at the same time with civic authorities and public duty-bearers. Include duty-bearers as participants in the response process. Support the linkage between the **two levels of response**.
18. **Support communities** towards demand-driven action and advocacy.
19. **Accompany communities** through the process of response, through routine visitation and participation alongside local activities, follow-up and feedback.
20. **Form teams** at the community level with other stakeholders who share interest and values.






















COMMON CHARACTERISTICS AND BEHAVIOURS:














CHARACTERISTIC PRACTICES	KZF	PPS	VWZ
1. The organisation had a strong, high-quality pre-existing relationship with the community it was stimulating around WASH and other WASH-integrated program elements (e.g. disability-inclusion; child protection)			
2. The organisation from which the local implementing team was constituted had a mature, current, vibrant practice, with experience in health programming, service delivery, social development or social justice, or in facilitation or participatory approaches to development.			
3. Leadership of the facilitation, consultation and participation process was through a team of local people who are themselves members of that community.			
4. Tangible programme activities and development interventions did not commence immediately when the programme started. The organisations committed one to two years at the initial stage of the project as an investment in relationship-building, trust-building, and vision-building with communities and community leaders to ensure ownership, shared vision and common intention.			
 <p>KZF: “We started our work with WASH as early as 2011, but it was only in 2012 and 2013 that what would look like real WASH-activities began.</p> <p>We used 2011 to build relationships with the local community, starting with the local authorities – traditional leaders, teachers, the local government – who then called a community meeting where the community selected focal people who would be trained as community facilitators.”</p>			

CHARACTERISTIC PRACTICES	KZF	PPS	VWZ
<p>5. The organisation involved the community members themselves from as early on into the programme as possible, using the relationship-building phase with the community leaders, communities and public office duty-bearers to identify clearly the beneficiaries of the process, and to identify the major stakeholders and interest groups for influencing.</p> <p> PPS: “Involve the people themselves from the very beginning, as early on as practically possible, even when it seems inconvenient to the project. Involve them. We move together with them through every step of the process, and they themselves come up with the decisions about every action.</p> <p>When we were doing the Savings Groups with the villages, people were talking about the problem of saving because they had very little money. As facilitators, we asked them ‘How do we grow the money, then?’. People themselves decided they should meet biweekly and everyone makes a very small contribution, an amount agreed by each member. We then asked ‘How do you want to use this money?’. They decided that members could borrow from the pot, but repay at a small percentage interest that would be monitored by the group.</p> <p>And by 2014/2015, some groups were able to show that at the end of each year, from their accumulated interest, they could retain some money in the central fund – their village bank – and share dividends between members.”</p>			

CHARACTERISTIC PRACTICES	KZF	PPS	VWZ
<p>6. At the inception of the process, the organisation met with the traditional community leaders to explain the vision, seek permission and endorsement, and discuss strategy for engaging the wider community.</p> <p> PPS: “We were not going to enter the community and just impose our agenda. That wouldn’t work. Instead, we introduced ourselves to the traditional leaders and explained the objective of our organisation. After that meeting, it was the responsibility of the traditional leaders to decide whether to work with us in the first place, and then to inform the people of our presence in that place. The leaders called a meeting with all the community members to talk about the idea of vulnerability in the community and the thought of addressing it together and people began to volunteer – some, not everyone at first – themselves to begin to work together.”</p>			
<p>7. Inclusion is an integrated part of the process thinking from the very beginning, and in conversation with the community leaders: <i>who else needs to be a part of this conversation? Who is not here that should be?</i></p> <p> PPS: “We built into our first engagement with the traditional leaders – and then with the community members – a way to open up the discussion about inclusion, through asking questions like ‘Who are the types of people we would need to include in a community discussion? Who would make the best contribution? Now, who is not represented in that group? Are there any groups of people in our community who are also vulnerable, but are not included in our list?’”</p>			

CHARACTERISTIC PRACTICES	KZF	PPS	VWZ
<p>8. The CBO worked with the community to generate an integrated understanding of its physical and social environment, not limited to the narrow, specific issues of WASH: <i>how is life, in general? What are the concerns about what is happening in this community?</i></p> <p> PPS: “Before initiating any activities, we worked with each community to do a baseline exercise. We did this using a Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) methodology that involved a few different approaches.</p> <p>We did a transect walk together, looking at the resources and challenges we could see in the community. We facilitated focus group discussions to stimulate the community to think and talk together, but also to help us as the organisation to better understand the context. People were able to identify concerns, generally, about the conditions affecting them and their lives.</p> <p>A community meeting was called to give feedback on the baseline and to share the findings. This was really stimulating for the community members who started to analyse the findings and debate them, and add to them. They then prioritised some issues for attention and made some plans for action, either by themselves, or through some other external resource that they identified.”</p> <p>David Mwamba, Oxfam GB: “For us, it was important that WASH was integrated into life, first. Not just into programmes. Communities don’t live in compartments. They live integrated lives. In Zambia, we started with a blank paper, not with a WASH agenda.”</p>			
<p>9. After-action reflection and debriefing is an institutionalised behaviour; team members were not positioned as experts on WASH; they learned with the community, from the community, and from their own practice. Facilitation process design was responsive, adapting to and being informed by, learning from local engagement.</p>			

CHARACTERISTIC PRACTICES	KZF	PPS	VWZ
10. Consultation and stimulation happened by convening large community-wide public gatherings, called either by the community leaders or the community facilitators.			
11. Consultation and stimulation happened through small focus-group discussion.			
12. Consultation was designed as a combination of home visits (private; intimate) and community conversations (public; shared). The two environments of home and neighbourhood were dynamically interconnected through a common narrative emerging from consultation.			
13. The consultation process was first stimulated/provoked through door-to-door visits. Visits stimulated community members around the issue through strategic questioning, not primarily through information sharing and education about the issue.			
14. The consultation process and events created an opportunity for people to think and speak, not to the local implementing team, primarily, but, instead, to each other. Consultation stimulated, without defaulting to educating.			
15. Consultation processes started from an affective point of reference, not necessarily an exclusively factual point of reference. Implementing teams did the work to allow communities to first think, "What does this mean for me?" and to personalise the issue, before introducing factual information.			
16. Organisations describe their role as that of development facilitators, not expert implementers, and can articulate the values and behaviours that characterise that positioning.			

CHARACTERISTIC PRACTICES	KZF	PPS	VWZ
<p>17. Consultation was bottom-up, working directly with the community. At the same time, organisations worked with civic authorities and public office-bearers from as early on as possible. Working at both levels allowed CBOs to be more strategically inclusive, and facilitate linkage between the two levels. Duty-bearers were not externalised from the process of development, cast purely as a target for influencing; they were considered as participants in the process of change.</p> <div data-bbox="178 500 923 757" style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 10px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p> Ministry of Education, Luampa: “They – KZF – took the time to work with us in the Ministry of Education first before implementing any activities. This gave them a lot of credibility with the teachers who wanted, then, to work together.”</p> <p>Village Water Zambia: “We engaged government from the start. If we only consult with communities and don’t include government, the work will be unsustainable after the NGO projects conclude.”</p> </div>			
<p>18. Organisations practiced facilitation as a way of working, stimulating demand-driven action and advocacy by communities, rather than passive supply-driven development.</p>			
<p>19. Organisations accompanied the communities throughout the process, working consistently with each place through routine visits, feedback and follow-up. Practice was characterised by accompaniment and participation by organisations in community life.</p>			
<p>20. Organisations did not work alone, but formed teams at the community level with other stakeholders who shared interest and values (e.g. Zambian Police Service on Child Protection, YWCA on Gender, ZAPD and ZAFOD on disability-inclusion).</p>			

WORKING BY FACILITATION

Development Practitioners Reflect

PPS: “We work with marginalised people in rural communities. We see our role as being to stir them up so they can change their lives, economically and socially. But, we don’t bring change to the people. We are facilitators. We use approaches that trigger communities to appreciate their need for change, and support them to find solutions to their problems through working together.”

PPS: “The development issue doesn’t matter much in our experience. In our twenty years of work in this province, we have responded to a range of environmental conditions with communities. Agriculture, HIV, Health, WASH, Food security. And that list can keep growing as communities need to address different issues that matter to them. Our approach stays the same.”

We aim to move the conscience of the community so that they feel their need to act in their own time. And if they feel it strongly enough, they will act urgently enough.”

KZF: “There has been such a dramatic **change in attitude** in many of these communities towards, especially, sanitation. There used to be so much stigma that people could not talk about it. It was an insult to talk about toilets. They were dirty places where dirty things happened. It was not appropriate to talk about them. Or to be seen going to them. That’s why it was often preferred to just use the bush, so no one knew what you

were doing. But through the process of AACES, through all the conversations and consultations and community meetings and home visits, people are feeling much more **free to talk** about and use these toilets. And are taking pride in constructing them.”

PPS: “We believe that people are **vulnerable** – which is why we support them – but they are still **viable** – which is why we don’t act on their behalf. They have **strength** to do things for themselves.”

Village Water Zambia: “We believe that when people are **properly activated**, then they take responsibility for contributing to and sustaining the benefits of development in their own lives. For us at Village Water Zambia, ‘proper activation’ meant a few things: it means we go about capacity-building in a particular way, blending technical training in drilling with entrepreneurial skills including managerial skills, tendering, contract management, and impact assessment to preserve the professional credibility and reputation of the drillers. From the beginning of our capacity-building, we sell the idea that the individuals are capable and can be independent. They are not being trained so that Village Water Zambia can implement its project. They can be enterprising if they want to be, and successful.”

We recognise the strength of the people we are working with, and their ability as individuals to be self-determining.

People are capable of leading in their own lives. We see our role to stimulate a vision in the people. To see the future, a distant horizon. Our work is to support them to feel free to walk, and then to walk in the light, not stumbling to find their way in the dark.”

PPS: “We can’t say we are specialists in anything. But **generally, we are facilitators** who want to see that communities are involved in development approaches where they live. Historically, our government has been using a needs-based approach, assuming what people need, a top-to-bottom approach. People were just given services and facilities they didn’t want or didn’t necessarily need, and without any consultation or participation. And these structures quickly became white elephants. We shifted from a needs-based approach to a **rights-based approach**, and endeavoured to work **inclusive of all** who should participate – men, women, children, youth, and people living with disabilities.”

KZF: “With our sensitisation in the communities, we start always with **asking questions**.

We don’t just start talking. Let them share what they know. Encourage them to participate: “What do you think? What do you know? Do you have experiences to share?”.

Through the questions and the discussion that follows, community members recognise situations they didn’t even think were an issue. And we provide no answers,

only questions. We let the community decide, because we believe they know best.

‘And now, what do we do about that?’

‘And who will provide that?’

‘Where will those resources come from?’

‘Where else would we be able to use this solution?’ ”

PPS: “We see part of our role in communities to **assist them to recognise** and identify the most vulnerable in their community, and understand the importance of working together. When you look at the background of our organisation, it was about facilitating access for rural women to participate in their own development processes. Traditionally, women were not involved. They had very high levels of illiteracy, and had no permission to express themselves in public. So we started to meet and talk with the traditional leaders to stimulate them to recognise that women were on the margins. Then we worked with these women to talk about participation, and to identify what resources they had among themselves and in themselves, and how they might want to mobilise together for support.”

Village Water Zambia: “We believe that it is the recognition of **capacity** by people themselves that is ultimately necessary for social change to happen.

And we see that as our role as an organisation working with people in communities: to facilitate this awakening – this self-realisation – about social capital within people, so that they are actualised.”



COMPONENT 4

PRINCIPLES

The STEPS and PRACTICES, discussed in earlier sections, speak clearly to practical action. They represent a sequence of activity by Intermediary Organisations or elements of CBO practice to systematically stimulate, facilitate, support and strengthen public participation towards active civic engagement.

Complementing these practices, PRINCIPLES speak to ways of thinking and ways of working, a certain character or value that defines an approach to the work. If STEPS and PRACTICES answer the question “*What will we do?*”, PRINCIPLES answer the question “*In what way will we work?*”.

The anecdotal evidence suggests that these ways of working are a critical dimension to effective facilitative behaviour by organisations: to moving communities through the continuum from consultation to accountability, and towards building social cohesion.

The principles go some way to illuminating the underlying causal and correlated mechanisms that may drive the Theory of Change – that is, why certain actions produce certain effects. As such, they may be useful considerations to programme designers in their approach to certain consultative and participatory development processes.

But how were they generated? The principles surface quite simply from stories emerging from implementers in different locations as they reflect on their work, and share their individual experiences. As experiences accumulate, common themes, patterns and lessons can be recognised, and organised around a certain simple, conditional logic: *if this, then that*. In the development of this document, implementers of the AACES WASH

programme in South Africa and Zambia recounted their own stories, and contributed to framing their own principles.

It is especially interesting to observe in this second volume of the series on facilitating active civic engagement that principles framed in *Volume 1: Learning for Local Communities through the NHI-Accountability Project in South Africa* are validated and reinforced. Despite the fact that stories and experiences are subjective, and geographically and thematically specific, they appear to illustrate similar principles. This builds a case for believing these principles may be transferable and applicable to a range of other contexts beyond this project or subject matter. They are, in fact, progressively ‘stacking’, accumulating into a more robust Knowledge Asset on development practice, irrespective of the development issue. As experiences continue to accumulate over time, generated through routine and disciplined learning, principles will dynamically become better refined, and more mature.

In reviewing the principles below, generated from the AACES WASH programme, the following considerations should be taken into account:

- Thirteen broad sets of principles could be defined, illustrated and reinforced by experiences of the implementing partners across multiple locations. Each set is organised around a core general principle, a number of more specific sub-principles, and illustrative stories, and is articulated and framed by AACES WASH practitioners, and generated from their experience.
- While STEPS FOR INTERMEDIARY ORGANISATIONS draws from the experience of both South Africa and Zambia, the PRINCIPLES are drawn exclusively from the Zambian experience.⁵

- Most of the principle-sets, general principles and sub-principles are carried over from *Volume 1: Learning for Local Communities through the NHI-Accountability Project in South Africa*, as they are consistently reinforced by the experience of AACES, albeit through stories and illustrations that are unique and distinct to AACES.
- The experience does, however, suggest new learning. Several new sub-principles have emerged and one new principle-set, "Integration", has been added.

N The 'N' symbol marks new sub-principles.

- Some principles are internal, speaking to the values and behaviour of organisations. Other principles are external, speaking to the practice of consultation and facilitation, and the theory of an approach.
- Principles link to stories that, in turn, are linked to organisations and people whose experience may be helpfully instructive to others. It may, in fact, not be necessary to collect every piece of information available (the volume of which may actually be counterproductive). For the best learning, it may be more efficient and effective to simply contact the person who holds that experience. In this way, the principles become a way to link people to one another, to

learn very specifically from each other on particular practice.

- Ideally, the strongest principles are based on the strongest experience, making them much more legitimate than opinion or hypothesis. Every principle is not equally represented by experience in this volume. This may simply be because those stories did not emerge as clearly in discussions with AACES partners, who simply shared their experience without being led to match those stories to any particular analytical framework; certainly, the stories recorded in this section are only illustrative, not comprehensive or exhaustive in their depiction of the work of a multi-country project over five years.

Many of the principles are supported by other experiences recorded in *Volume 1: Learning for Local Communities through the NHI-Accountability Project in South Africa*, specific to that context, and not repeated in this volume.

In some areas, the principles are not yet fully conceived or articulated. They are in a formative state, recognising that the analysis of engagement and civic response is a learning work in progress, and leaving room for experience to be added at a later stage, or for new experience to be generated.

Principles are, in this sense, abstractions, indicators of how process progresses. In some places, a leap of intuition is needed to bridge the interim gap that may appear between 'common sense' 'and anecdotal evidence.'



COMMON PRINCIPLES

emerging from organisations effectively engaged in a facilitative response process at organisational and community levels

1. If we cultivate **integrity within our organisational culture**, then how we behave (internally amongst staff and externally with communities) is consistent, and matches what we say we believe and value. We learn from communities and each other, and are able to adapt.
2. If we facilitate meaningful **links between communities and other civil society organisations**, then public participation is made more effective, legitimate and authentic.
3. If we keep people connected to their own process **through routine feedback and follow-up after consultation**, communities sustain and expand their sense of ownership and investment in the issue, and take more confident decisions for action.
4. If we **make the subject matter personal** – allow communities to think about and feel their own reality instead of promoting our organisational agenda or educating with facts – then people are better able to access the topic, and feel motivated to actively participate.
5. If consultation is facilitated through a responsible approach, it becomes more than an isolated event: it is a **springboard for greater levels of public participation**, ownership, accountability and citizen-action.
6. If we, as **organisations, participate appropriately alongside communities**, then their natural leadership and strength has space to emerge, without inappropriate dependence on organisations.
7. If a process for participation is **designed and facilitated by local people**, it is accessible and relatable to many more people in the community, who feel empowered to integrate their own experience into that process. The quality and effectiveness of consultation, participation and response improve dramatically.

8. If we link consultation in the **private space of the home, with the public space of the community**, then everyone becomes involved. Intimacy, responsibility and solidarity come together through one process.
9. If our facilitation approach engages the **emotional before the rational** (feelings before facts), people in community are more likely to engage, participate and respond.
10. If we **stimulate communities with good questions**, instead of providing information only, people become engaged in discussion, participation increases, and organisations gain insight into how to adapt their consultation process.
11. If we have **established relationship and trust** with communities, they participate more freely in discussion and dialogue without suspicion or a sense of interrogation. Consultation is not an event; it is part of an ongoing conversation in the community.
12. If we make provision in our activities to accommodate the needs of people during public consultation (eg. childcare), then they feel included; **inclusion** leads to greater participation.
13. If we work in an **integrated** way, looking at the “broad whole”- not only on separate “special parts” – then complex development outcomes at community level become more achievable and sustainable.

1. ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

If we cultivate integrity within our organisational culture, then how we behave (internally among staff and externally with communities) is consistent, and matches what we say we believe and value. We learn from communities and each other, and are able to adapt.

N If we are willing to learn, we will learn. If we think we know everything, we won't learn, and we'll be left behind.

If we are a learning organisation, then we will have in place systems and mechanisms for effective, informative capturing, monitoring, reflection, learning and accountability, as well as for application and transfer of our learning to other thematic areas.

If we apply the same values and ways of working within our organisation as we do with communities – listening, recognition, dialogue, validation – then consultation, internally, leads to greater levels of participation, ownership and accountability within the organisation.

If we follow the same Theory of Change within our organisation as we apply outside, then we model a way of working for our staff that builds their capacity to engage well with communities.

If we utilise consultation to meaningfully learn from local action and experience, then we will become more responsive in our actions and behaviours. A learning culture makes the organisation more dynamic, more adaptable, more relevant and more strategic.



David Mwamba, WASH Programme Manager, Oxfam GB in Zambia: “If you want to define the whole project in advance in 2011 and have everything planned out in advance, what space are you leaving for the community leadership that we claim to be promoting? We opted instead to live with a degree of risk and uncertainty and ambiguity, trusting that the process itself – the way we were choosing to work with the communities and partners – could give us space to reflect and course-correct, and be responsive and adaptive and shaping and growing, based on community input. This was the case for both Zambia and South Africa. We had the

basic understanding of where we wanted to go – we had to really lobby our donors for time and trust – but were short on the specifics so that we could stay more open to participation ourselves.”

Village Water Zambia: “We were not always the kind of organisation that we are now. We used to be experts in hygiene promotion and sanitation hardware. We had knowledge and answers and solutions. AACES presented us with an opportunity – and it gave me an excuse as a Director to move in this direction with my organisation – to really promote learning and analysis inside our organisation.”

The closer we got to the community, and the way people were reacting to various interventions – a lot of the time we were doing activities, but not seeing good uptake – the more we started seriously questioning ourselves. We didn't want to keep doing the same things the same way and expecting different results. We worked hard to become more accountable to ourselves and to the communities so that we could feel challenged by them. And it changed the way we think about our work. We went from being traditionally output-driven, so focussed on checklists and numbers and what we do, to being more conscious about outcomes, checking whether we were achieving the intention of our work, thinking the 'so what?' questions so that our work became more meaningful.

Now, as a practical example, we are able to design our latrines so differently, because we are asking different questions and analysing the process of our work, with our partners in the community. It's helped us to think outside the box."

Village Water Zambia: "We have always talked about participation as a value in the way that we work with communities, but AACES really pushed us to think much deeper about what participation really means, and how we make that possible with the communities where we work. For us, participation has become the highest level of partnership, and it comes down to giving the citizens the responsibility for making decisions.

This has not been always easy. But AACES had this focus on real community engagement, and it made us braver as an organisation. We feel proud to say that we are so much more accountable to the communities now than before. We are transparent with them, to the point of sharing our budgets so everyone

knows how much money is around for particular projects and where that money comes from. It's not a secret. And we can be challenged by the communities – they really do hold us to account.

And it's had a real impact, internally, on us in the organisation. Our personnel have gained so much insight, skill and confidence to think and talk about inclusion, about gender, about disability, and the ability to unshackle and deconstruct concepts and represent these ideas to those in power."

David Mwamba, OGB: "We need to reach a stage where our community-based partners demonstrate the same level of transparency and accountability they expect from Oxfam, and from the communities. It's one thing to talk about participation and accountability when the target is government, but, within our network of partners – and even from the community – we also need to feel answerable and transparent. Also linked to the idea of accountability is the idea of honesty. Part of having an honest relationship is people admitting when they are wrong, and maintaining the same memory so that these memories stay the same even though time moves on. But these memories change over time. For us as Oxfam, we've done a lot of internal cleaning of our organisation over the last few years, but we couldn't do the same on behalf of the partners – we were not in control of them. We have had to think together about how to change the culture of our organisations and find the best way to see that people were professional and accountable, and were able to do what they said they could or would do.

We initiated a Partner Management meeting, held monthly with all the partners, and have been trying to use these meetings to coordinate so that the gender work and construction work and other themes are

not disparate. And we're trying to encourage disclosure of budgets so everyone knows the financial situation of the project. Some are doing better than others.

A big element of this partnership of organisations – a factor in making it successful – was the need for accountability and professionalism that flowed both ways. If that element is lacking, participation really becomes just words that are used for people to do what they want to do. Credible – transparent and accountable – relationships need to be there, based on shared values. Lots of people use those words, but don't really know what it means in practice. What they do is not really consistent with what they say they believe."

Village Water Zambia: "We have helped to establish sanitation committees in schools. The process undertaken with them is not training or infrastructure, it's not about education to increase knowledge or correct practices and attitudes, as if people don't know anything. We see our role, rather, as trying to ignite what they do know. We curiously ask questions about all kinds of things. We try to stimulate conversation that surfaces the gaps between what people know and how people behave. And we provide no answers, only questions. We let the community decide, because we believe they know best.

This process has enriched us as an organisation. It is helping us to stay dynamic, relevant and never static. We've seen ourselves shift from being intervenors and providers to being facilitators."

Village Water Zambia: "At some point in our work as an organisation, we had almost lost our way. In earlier days, we used to be very focussed on the impact of our work – we were not about digging boreholes,

we were hygiene promoters for the sake of better health outcomes in communities. But we got distracted. When we started to add in our drilling programs and supplement our health promotion work with service delivery of safe drinking water, we got carried away. We became very focussed on outputs, on numbers, on what we did – the activities – instead of thinking of the 'how' or the 'why'. Service-delivery and provision were easier to achieve. And we began to use water as a carrot – as a condition – with which to control the community behaviour, almost as if we were telling them "if you do these things, if you change these behaviours, we will give you water". We didn't intend for it, but it detoured us.

AACES was a process that was not heavy on delivering infrastructure. Instead, it promoted advocacy. At first, we struggled to see how we could activate communities without the carrot we had become accustomed to using.

The programme required us to make space to reflect, to think, not only to implement. We had to stop and ask the "so what?" questions. They became built into our M&E system, and over time we began to institutionalise this kind of reflection. It helped us to change, and find our way again. And it changed the course of our engagement with the community, in the way we implemented the work. We started measuring different things, not only outputs. We began to look for change in the way people were responding, not only activities on the surface. Before, we used to only monitor numbers of toilets, or numbers of boreholes. But we adapted our M&E systems to also reflect outcomes and impact asking, for instance, 'if the facilities are in place, are they being used? What is the evidence that they are being properly used? What is changing?'"

Village Water Zambia: “Before AACES, we were disability-blind. AACES built in questions within the project reporting requirements that helped us think about what it meant to be fully inclusive. We were challenged to think about how truly accessible our programmes and services were so that they provided equitable access to all. We started to unpack and reflect on this all. We realised we were not considering the practical implications of that question on the design of our work. Could old people utilise stairs? Could the disabled? Could

a pregnant woman utilise the latrine? We began to seriously think about the integrity of our mission and the alignment of our practice with our values.

And then we expanded this reflection with the communities. As a result of all those reflections and a series of consultations with communities, our work began to incorporate a more disability-inclusive design for water points and latrines (ramps, appropriate size of doorways, and hand rails etc.), starting with facilities at schools.”

2. LINKING COMMUNITIES WITH CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

If we facilitate meaningful links between communities and other civil society organisations, then public participation is made more effective, legitimate and authentic.

If we facilitate linkage between local communities and civil society organisations, then local communities can feel better supported and accompanied in their advocacy, consultation and participation work, and be aided to escalate their influence to higher levels, without being overwhelmed, or distracted from their local implementation.

If we link local-level engagement with CSO-level engagement, it facilitates solidarity and supports sustainability – the movement can continue independently without us.

If we work with both local-level communities and civil-society organisations – and facilitate a linkage between them – then CSOs can act as a channel for locally generated evidence to higher-level policy processes.

If we link local-level engagement to CSO-level engagement, it builds capacity at local level for communities to increase their literacy around policy-reform, and have greater access to opportunities to participate.

If we link local-level engagement to CSO-level engagement, it makes possible a way for higher-level, technical advocacy to be more credibly informed by local experience and input.



David Mwamba, WASH Programme Manager, Oxfam GB in Zambia: “Ward Development Committees (WDCs) are an initiative of the government as part of its strategy to decentralise authority and responsibility to local levels of society. And, while that idea existed on paper, no WDCs had been implemented because the local councils had no resources to do the public participation work needed to get people ready to engage. Oxfam GB in Zambia approached the council, offering to support the process with resources to conduct pre-election sensitisation, to conduct voter registration, to conduct WDC elections, and to support the operationalisation of a community elected WDC. The local

council agreed. And as part of the AACES project, these Ward Committees as they formed were responsible for generating with the community Ward Plans that followed on from the Participatory Rural Appraisal processes.

Now by 2013, in Imalyo Ward, the World Bank was establishing the Pilot Project for Climate Resilience (PPCR). We advised the Permanent Secretary’s office, particularly the Chief Planner, and the programme manager for the PPCR project to recruit PPS for the implementation of the project in Imalyo, so as not confuse the community with duplication of processes and approaches, and organisational reference points. Fortunately, they agreed.

You see, we had been recognised and appreciated for our planning approach. Even though we were working with the communities, we were not only thinking about bottom-up approaches, but, we were deliberately looking for an intersection between the community priorities and government priorities, and we used the provincial planning unit to advise the communities on the government priorities during different stages of community consultation. Representatives of the Planning Unit participated directly in the process. This made it easier for me later to access that level of government administration. They knew me. And more importantly they knew what was happening with the other programme because they'd been part of it.

We also asked them to consider recognising the work that had been done through the Participatory Rural Appraisals, the Ward Plans and the establishment of the Ward Development Committees. They received the plans, and gave feedback that they were impressed with the work already done. It seems we were ahead of them, as they still had to do specific surveys in line with their own government M&E. And after they had completed those surveys, I looked at what came out – and it was exactly what came out in the Ward Plans. The community showed that it knew things, even before the technical people knew things.

During the implementation of the PPCR, Natango community in Imalyo ward successfully managed its own community grant of \$50 000 (US), completing

all activities that included a 20km canal clearing project, with no audit issues. One of the activities was to clear a canal, which the community achieved, and it is still the only canal that is useful out of all the other supported. Imalyo was recognised as outperforming all other wards. You see, that community had elected one of the young ladies trained in construction through AACES to manage the grant, and she really did very well. She is the only one who has been invited twice to the World Bank organised review meetings to share the experiences of that community.

This has now so influenced the World Bank that it has changed the guidelines for the PPCR to require WDC and the Ward Development plans as conditions before moving to the next stage where they will access more support. Imalyo can now progress to that next stage – managing a much bigger grant of \$200 000 (US) – the only ward moving to that stage.⁴

Luampa District Council: “Instead of just intervening for us and letting us learn to rely on them, KZF facilitated a meeting in September 2015 to bring together the community facilitators with local authorities to get to know each other and figure out better ways to work together, and how to share responsibilities.”

***NOTE: Further illustrations are recorded elsewhere in this publication. See, for example, STEPS 4, 5 and 6 for Intermediary Organisations.**

3. FEEDBACK AND FOLLOW-UP

If we keep people connected to their own process through routine feedback and follow-up after consultation, communities sustain and expand their sense of ownership and investment in the issue, and take more confident decisions for action.

N Good participation comes with time. If people have the time and space to learn the 'language' of the process – to become familiar and conversant with the philosophy and practice – they find comfortable ways to access the process and increase the quality of their participation.

If we are committed to meaningfully engaging with and respecting communities, then we will be intentional and systematic about giving feedback to communities about their participation in the process.

If we are consistent, systematic and intentional about feedback to communities, it reinforces trust, builds relationship and solidarity, and expands and deepens the quality and opportunity and invitation for continued dialogue.

If people receive feedback on the process in which they've been involved, then they continue to feel connected to the process as it progresses; their interest, participation and hopefulness will be sustained.



Luampa District Council: “If you don't do good follow-up, you don't know if you're making progress. KZF's visits were very encouraging to us as a community. They didn't just drop supplies and go. They kept coming back to see how we were progressing, and this kept our people stimulated and interested.”

Area Chief, Imalyo Ward: “A long time ago as a young man, when I worked with the Zambian Army, I was idle in the first part of the training. I would easily turn left when they said turn right. I was confused, until I learned the language of that place, and then I felt free to really do well. This AACES was like that. At first we were lost. A lot was foreign to us. But these people gave us time; they were patient with us

and we kept seeing them come back to check that we were okay and that we were together.”

Imalyo ward representative: “AACES started in our place with hygiene promotions, but it seemed not to be too effective. People mostly stayed the same. But when CLTS was introduced it seemed to drive the process forward well. Even then it was not smooth sailing. It was a process of trial and experimentation and review and analysis and adjustment and learning. And we did this together, over time. PPS kept coming back to support us, to listen, to ask questions. The first training took place with PPS in 2011, and it took a while to get the community participation process underway, but by 2013 and 2014, responses could be seen everywhere like flames.”

KZF: “At the start of our work, we needed to do a baseline exercise. The baseline happened in two ways: first, through door-to-door household visits, especially in areas where homes were scattered; second, through community meetings. Trained community facilitators came up with a work plan so that they worked in teams, village-by-village, not alone. And, after the home visits and community meetings, they met together as teams to consolidate their data and analyse their findings. As their partner, KZF provided them with flipcharts and markers and some plain paper which they used during their baseline consultation processes to generate discussion with the communities.

After a month or two, KZF with the community facilitators went back to the communities to share the findings of the baseline and check the accuracy of the data. Facilitators asked community members “Is this true? Does this reflect our conversation accurately?” And in those feedback meetings, people would be even more stimulated by the findings and want to add more detail.”

ZPS with PPS: “The Zambian Police Service (ZPS) has a community services directorate. We were invited for a meeting with Oxfam to join in as partners with the AACES project. We have a unit focussed on child protection and child safety, and this seemed a good match for that objective in the project. We formed a team with PPS and began to follow their sanitation-promotion process, visiting the communities together to share life experiences and community concerns, and to discuss, and we gave input to the

consultations that could open up the discussion about child safety.

Through our visits we realised there were many early marriages of girls, leading to an interruption in education, as well as child labour – especially for boys – which was compromising the children’s rights to education. We began to discuss these issues with the communities from a rights perspective, and surfaced many stories. The community was quite knowledgeable once the conversations began, sharing many real life experiences known to them; this opened up more opportunities to name the issue more directly and publicly. At first some of them didn’t even know it was a crime, but they came to realise it and started holding each other responsible.

We now hear reports that communities are standing against families who are trying to marry off children. And children themselves are realising their rights. In a community in Imalyo ward, a girl who was due to be married complained to her headmaster and neighbours. The community challenged the wedding and called the police who arrived in that village just before the wedding took place, in time to prevent it. In Imalyo, Lukweta and Lukakanya communities, villages formed neighbourhood watch committees to monitor that children’s rights are respected and not abused.

And we ourselves, as the police service, learned. We realised that we have to follow-up with the communities regularly, despite the distances. When we feel close to them, it helps them keep up their progress.”

4. RELATING TO PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

If we make the subject matter personal – allow communities to think about and feel their own reality instead of promoting our organisational agenda or educating with facts – then people are better able to access the topic, and feel motivated to actively participate.

If you run a consultation process where people can engage from their own experience, then spaces are created for people to really engage with the content of the process. (Experience is more effective than theory.)

If we package our information/messaging in a way that represents and reflects the lived reality/experience of people – if we start from their experience, not our own agenda – then they can better internalise the need for change and engage with the process.

If people internalise (personalise; identify with) the reason for change, then they are more likely to engage with the process.

If people internalise (understand) the impact and implications of a policy, then they are more likely to engage with the process.

If people have a familiar reference point through which to understand an abstract concept (like a policy), then it becomes easier for them to authentically engage in conversation; consultation becomes more inclusive, more accessible, and more effective.

If we work with communities, starting from their lived experience first, but going beyond that to make the personal political, then we stimulate and motivate passive community members towards constructive active citizenship.



Village Water Zambia: “Working in this new way – more deliberately, more with our eyes open – where we took engagement with the community much more seriously, and tried to learn from the local people, gave us new ways of thinking about participation, and the power of participation when people really get involved in developing their own lives. We could see that for many of them it became a case of ‘if I participate, I internalise. When I internalise, I start to think about solutions in my

own life. Then I feel empowered to take action for myself. And with others.”

Village Water Zambia: “Before AACES, we were disability-blind. AACES built in questions within the project reporting requirements that helped us think about what it meant to be fully inclusive. We were challenged to think about how truly accessible our programmes and services were so that they provided equitable access to all. We started to unpack and

reflect on this 'all'. We realised we were not considering the practical implications of that question on the design of our work. Could old people utilise stairs? Could the disabled? Could a pregnant woman utilise the latrine? We began to seriously think about the integrity of our mission and the alignment of our practice with our values.

And then we expanded this reflection with the communities. At community gatherings, we explored how access to all meant 'all', stimulating that conversation from an emotional point of view, using pictures and stories and questions. We showed pictures of the elderly, of pregnant women, of disabled people, of obese people.

At first, when we asked people what they thought about the water and sanitation facilities in the community, and how good they would be for people with disabilities, the community responded "*we don't have such people*". We recognised that disability-inclusion was a new area for us, so we engaged with partners in Zambia who specialised in work with disability. They contributed facilitators who were, themselves, living with disabilities, and joined our team for community visits.

This really changed the impression of the community about people living with disabilities, recognising that they were capable, competent, independent and skilled. One of the facilitators was even a provincial program coordinator!

Over a series of visits, the community opened up about its own experience of disability and the way people are excluded. Community meetings began to address stigma, discussing how everyone is vulnerable in some way, and how disability could happen to anyone. People became more aware and sensitive and things changed. They realised that making provisions for access for all was good for everyone

because it provided disabled people with independence, so they were not a burden on others. Communities began asking how to modify their facilities at household level in order to be more accessible to people with disabilities who they were now beginning to publicly acknowledge as being part of their families at home, and to other groups with special needs. Communities applied pressure on schools to be more generally inclusive, paying attention to how children with disabilities accessed the classrooms."

Imalyo Ward representative: "During the sensitisations and consultations, as the community facilitators did their work to sensitise the community, people could connect the issues about water and sanitation with diseases they recognised from their own experience. They could also see the change happening quickly when fewer people were getting sick. Sometimes, the whole community gathered together to talk about the health hazards that carried diseases, and identify where those places existed in the environment of the community. Sometimes, the whole community walked together to those places where open defecation happens and would start a discussion about it.

It ignited them; they wanted to change. People recognised the benefits of using toilets for themselves. And it's different to what we know from before: we see other communities where toilets have gone to waste because the right preparation work has not been done, and people were not given time to really think about the need to change. And yet, now during AACES, in other communities, they are implementing this toilet-building from their own initiative without even being directly sensitised through the project, just because they are close to some of the AACES-communities, or there are some WASH-champions nearby."

5. THE EFFECTS OF GOOD CONSULTATION

If consultation is facilitated through a responsible approach, it becomes more than an isolated event: it is a springboard for greater levels of public participation, ownership, accountability and citizen action.

If we are responsible in our facilitation, consultation stimulates increasing levels of participation towards local ownership that drives the accountability process forward; in turn, if local people feel an ownership of the process, they will take action to self-organise in order to monitor and to demand accountability.

If we respectfully engage people in consultation, it stimulates hope and expectation; appropriate expectation is not a bad thing – people are provoked towards expecting ‘accountability for action’.

If consultation is done ‘the right way’ (led by local people with local people; generating discussion through strategic questioning, not only giving information), then the process generates increased demand and invitation for deeper levels of consultation, for higher degrees of involvement and connection. Participation expands from organisationally-delivered consultation to community-driven consultation.

If our consultation process allows space for people to dream, to imagine, to envision the future they most wish to see, it elevates the energy around ‘possibility’ and ‘co-creation’ (doesn’t stay stuck in negative experiences). It generates hope, and hope is aspirational, inspirational and motivational.

Responsibility becomes owned – not externalised (e.g. change lies not in the policy, but with people, with response, with local movement).

N When people are properly stimulated, they increase their confidence, their will, their agency and leadership, and apply these strengths to other areas of human and community development.

N When local people feel genuinely included and empowered, they take action to maintain, protect, sustain, and advance development benefits in their environment.

N When people are stimulated and strengthened in their ability to self-govern and participate, traditional health and development outcomes are achieved; at the same time, communities gain confidence and increased will to act and change.



Luampa District Council: “Before AACES and the WASH process, people were drinking unsafe water, leading to so many diarrhoeal diseases. Now, people have access to safe water, and they also recognise how the level of disease has decreased. People are just not getting sick in that same way anymore. And they want to keep it that way.

Before, if a borehole was broken down, it would take years to be repaired. The community would just sit back and wait for someone to do something. But now, boreholes break down and they are repaired on time, very quickly, sometimes in less than a week. Each time a borehole was drilled, local people were trained as Area Pump Menders, so they know how to locally assess, advise and repair their equipment without having to wait on the council.”

Ministry of Health, Luampa District: “Through the WASH work, we visited a number of schools where we were able to do consultations, sensitisations and conversations with learners and teachers, and this led over time to the construction of latrines and hand-washing facilities by the community members at the school. In the days before this process, pupils would just go from the toilet to their classrooms, but now, they are even collecting water for themselves so that they can wash their hands. And the high number of diarrhoeal diseases that used to be there because of poor sanitation in schools decreased.

We did not expect that WASH would also have effects on education. These new conditions really motivated the learners. Previously, attendance at school was very low, but the WASH process sensitised the communities to the extent that even the school environment was being better looked after and improved, so that it was cleaner. The community became very much involved in the construction of these latrines, and started to take education much more seriously.

And the effects spread from there. Although we started with schools, now every household has a pit latrine of its own, and a dish-rack for drying dishes up off the ground. Parents took responsibility for building their own domestic latrines with their own resources. As health workers, this is making our work so much easier, as there is a much smaller caseload of diarrhoeal diseases.”

***NOTE:** Other stories and experiences that similarly illustrate principles of consultation and participation are distributed across the various sections of this book. They are not repeated in this section, but are utilised elsewhere to support a more focussed or concentrated analysis of participation. For more principles and illustrations on participation, see pages 23–25.

6. APPROPRIATE PARTICIPATION

If we, as organisations, participate appropriately alongside communities, then their natural leadership and strength has space to emerge, without inappropriate dependence on organisations.

N If you go into the community looking for problems, then you'll find them. If you go looking for assets, then solutions are generated. (Looking for problems raises expectations of externally-provided solutions. Problems are amplified through that analysis, and people feel hopeless and helpless.)

If we meaningfully participate with communities in their local experience – as citizens ourselves, not as technical experts – then open dialogue in a safe space is made possible.

If we want to build power in people, we cannot do that by bringing something – some commodity or intervention. We can only build power from within people's own experiences and personal resources.

In the initial gathering, if both parties are honest about their intentions, about what they can deliver, if they establish a relationship of 'radical equality', then expectations are not inappropriately raised, or projected onto someone else.

If we include ourselves in the process of imagining with people, then we don't raise expectations that we receive and implement on behalf of others; people feel responsible for their own action, and retain their agency.

If we provoke discussion around needs ("What do you need?"; "What do you believe you want?"), we shut down people from dreaming or imagining – their agency for response.

Instead, we redirect towards provision and expectation, instead of towards response.

If we provoke around strengths, then people have space for their own response, to plan and towards change.

If we assume that everyone knows something ("everyone can think") – people have their own assumptions and beliefs – then we don't approach consultation assuming we are the experts; we work with what people are saying, not our own expertise.



Luampa District Council: “If organisations’ projects come to an end, how will the community sustain those activities? They will say ‘the owners have gone’. But if people participate, they feel they own the products that are benefiting them and can sustain those even when the donors leave. When people are allowed to do things on their own – because those things are important to them – they become very active; they feel they own the project. When organisations impose, it makes it very hard to work.”

PPS, Community Mobilisation Officer: “We start with ourselves.

In the Zambian context, we have these District HIV and AIDS Taskforces. At one point, I was the vice-chair in one district when we were preparing for National VCT, planning for rural mass VCT outreach. What used to happen in those days was that committee members would agree on the distance we would cover to reach far out communities, for example ‘This time we will go up to 80km radius...’

In this prep meeting, I stood and said ‘I think we want to make a change. Each time we want to do this activity we go far out. I propose that everyone of us here, before we go out, should know our own status. We should be tested before we expect others to respond to that service, so we know the process of being tested, and we can say we also know our status, and we can understand how people feel about the services. And I will be the first.’

It was a disaster. People in the taskforce refused, saying they were not ready.

So we had to start examining ourselves in that committee, to address our own stigma, even among us as the so-called experts. It was the barrier that we kept

trying to address with others in the community, but would not confront in ourselves.”

David Mwamba, OGB: “Before AACES, the ACWSI programme was focussing on community-led water and sanitation. That same title was carried forward into AACES when it commenced as the project that followed ACWSI. We started to ask questions about how visible this community leadership was in our new project. Where was the evidence of it being truly community-led? Was it strong enough in our previous programme?”

Our reflections pushed us to think about how we needed to implement seriously and with meaning reflect real participation, and how best to ensure real community leadership throughout, from the beginning of the project, consistently. AACES recognised that the process was as important as the product. We were forced to ask more questions about the kind of processes we needed to work through to meet the aspirations of the overall programme. How were we going to meet our objectives around voice, increased demand by marginalised people, increased access by marginalised people, and accountability of duty-bearers? These questions became instructive for how we ended up working.

Participation became our strongest emphasis – not as a means to an end, but as an objective in its own right with all those elements of empowerment and accountability and inclusion. Right from the beginning, we wanted to do all the work with the involvement of all the interest groups, at as early a stage as possible. We had a demand on ourselves for a different way of encouraging participation to ensure that we were not just using participation as a carrot to control people so they could get the reward of a borehole or some other benefit. For us, participation was an objective in its own right.”

PPS: “We have always worked with those who are poor, with the disadvantaged, and those living in rural areas. At the same time, we have always believed that people are vulnerable – which is why we support them – but they are still viable – which is why we don’t act on their behalf. They have strength to do things for themselves. This is fundamental for us.”

Village Water Zambia: “We didn’t always think or work like we do now. We were more an output-checklist type organisation when I joined as director. Expanding our focus from hygiene and health promotion to water-delivery distracted us a little. And we didn’t see government as a partner. Instead of trying to influence government with our learning and experience, we just saw them as a competitor.

In AACES, I found the leverage I needed to support my instincts that we needed to focus on a deeper process. It gave us a new set of glasses to observe how work could be process-led, and generate lessons we could apply to several other areas of social change. It created a tension within our checklist-driven organisation. We started to more regularly embrace process-work, and reflection, thinking about implications of our actions and activities. How well we did what we did was as important as what we were doing. We were not afraid to say we had failed, and to feel empowered by it: to embrace change and adaptation.

And that process protected our content. We changed how we did ‘community-entry’. Previously, we tended to just go into communities, looking at ourselves as experts and providers. Instead, we began to pay attention to subtle, salient features of conversations, rich in meaning, but often overlooked by us before. We stopped giving information and started learning. We did not want to be the reservoir of knowledge

for communities. And once the community became activated, we found a much more sustainable way of working that even exceeded what we were able to do when we looked to ourselves to provide. Now, there are more volunteers than ever in our history, all working on WASH-issues and other development issues in their communities, unpaid. And water points in the community have increased from 30 per year, to over 100 per year, without VWZ having to increase staff.”

PPS: “In our organisation, we have always believed that people have a voice, even though they are vulnerable or marginalised. They have a voice of their own, so it is not necessary for us as organisations to speak as if we speak for ‘the voiceless’. We’ve realised that it is important to develop the community to be self-reliant, to become aware of their rights, and to have the skills for some advocacy. We’ve seen that if the communities feel some confidence to advocate and make demands on government, then those demands are taken more seriously. When organisations in civil society lobby on behalf of the marginalised, it is too easy for government to dismiss those demands, and accuse NGOs of being anti-government.”

Village Water Zambia: “The community in this area – Mulandu village in Kaoma – recognised their need for toilets, and wanted latrines developed. In our first year of community engagement through the AACES project, there was enthusiastic uptake and a mushrooming of community-constructed latrines. But the terrain here is very sandy and the construction of typical latrines is difficult. The construction simply collapses as the ground caves in. Typically, under these conditions, a latrine would collapse after only one rainy season. Communities were very frustrated. This reconstruction becomes a burden, and the

behaviour – to replace open defecation – becomes difficult to sustain. Communities give up, and people return to using the bush to defecate.

We discussed the issue in our office, concerned about what to do. We decided to return to the villages to meet with the community members. They had been happy with their own change – they saw the improved health statistics gathered by the local clinic, and could recognise improved health and notably fewer diarrhoeal diseases – and equally disappointed by the way the latrines had collapsed.

On our visit, we asked the community “how could we make this sustainable?”

Community members suggested an innovation from their own experience, a basket lining, as a way of protecting the pits from caving in by weaving a basket from sticks and leaves. Since implementing the basket lining strategy, latrines last up to three years without caving in. Increased contact with these more reliable latrines sustains and normalises the sanitation behaviour.”

PPS: “People in the communities were going deeper than we expected sometimes, and really taking

ownership of the issues in ways that exceeded the boundaries of the project. We recognised ownership in the way they realised what they needed in order to benefit their own lives, and could identify what they could do themselves, and where they needed to lobby duty-bearers to assist. As an organisation, even though we always believed in participation, we were really challenged. We changed our mentality too when we realised how communities were showing ownership. It was not our place to use a carrot-and-stick method as an incentive to get the people to do what we thought they needed to do. People assumed their tasks and responsibilities because they recognised it was for their own benefit, not for the profit of the organisation.”

Village Water Zambia: “We’ve learned a lot these few years about how to work. We don’t lecture communities. We stimulate through questions. We are not teachers. We are facilitators. We don’t pull from the front. We support from behind. We try and stay conscious of power, to not control through knowledge, through seating arrangements, through separation, or through formal protocol.”

7. ENABLING LOCAL LEADERSHIP

If consultation is designed and facilitated by local people, the process is accessible and relatable to many more people in the community, who feel empowered to integrate their own experiences into the process. The quality and effectiveness of consultation improves dramatically.

If we are committed to supporting and promoting full, meaningful participation, leading to local ownership, then we need to invest in building skills, capacity and confidence in local communities to drive their own process of consultation and action.

If you run a consultation process designed and facilitated by a group of local people who had been actively involved in thinking about the process and content, then the process is delivered in the language people can relate to; it responds to their experience and it means something to them.

Expertise is related to experience that allows us to relate to a policy; it gives us the right to speak to this policy that is meant to impact on our lived experience.

If local people are adequately capacitated to participate – to take the lead, and own their own local process – then the quality of that process increases significantly: in rigour, in enthusiasm, in quantity and in uptake. (Trust is good, but it isn't always enough; neighbours mean more. Co-creation is possible by organisations who participate with communities, but leadership is by locals.)

N If people are involved in the reporting system – responsible for their own measurement – then they feel important and recognised, and take responsibility for monitoring themselves and others.

N If you come by force to make people change, they will do it to please you, but once you leave, they will abandon it. The best thing is to aim to influence the mindset so people recognise and acknowledge their own need for change. If people see the benefit of change for themselves, they will take action and sustain the change.



David Mwamba, OGB: “The people who are benefiting from the project need to have space for meaningful participation in decision-making so that the leadership of key processes remains in their hands. Otherwise, how could we call our programme ‘community-led’?”

During the baseline processes in 2012, we sat down as a big group of stakeholders to ask ‘what kind of baseline do we want to do?’ We ultimately agreed that what we needed to do was a broad Participatory Rural Appraisal where all the development issues that people were grappling with could be surfaced.

We thought it was pointless to just replicate some kind of survey that would only generate data on water points that already existed at district or municipal level. The fear was that this process would create expectation of communities that the programme would fix everything. We had to find a way to explain what the process could do and what it couldn't do in order to manage these expectations. We chose to forego using external consultants to rapidly do assessment and generate a report because that would not build the capacity of district stakeholders and partners. That idea was thrown out. There was another idea that staff from our partner organisations could do the baseline, but we were concerned that there would be no community participation through that approach.

Ultimately we agreed on the approach where the partners and community members would be trained together, and the partners would oversee the community members doing the assessment work themselves. We thought it was the best approach because there was capacity building, space for participation, and sustainability of skills within the community to do it again if they wanted to. That's the approach we arrived at through a series of stakeholder discussions and debates, holding ourselves accountable to what the programme was about: participation, decision-making, and consultation. The principles influenced the practice.

There were all kinds of questions about efficiency of time, and the quality being compromised, but we agreed that it was better to have a slightly poorer quality in the report, but achieve higher levels of capacity and participation. It was better to take a little bit longer than to go fast and finish everything but compromise the key principles of the programme. The first report was, as expected, not

very good. We were all learning together. And once the PRA process was done, we engaged an external person to go through the report and write it up properly in a technical way. But we absorbed that risk for the sake of staying true to our principles.”

KZF: “We spent a year in building the relationship with local authorities and the communities around Luampa before any practical WASH-activities commenced. The traditional leaders helped us call a community meeting where the community selected members to be focal people on WASH and to be trained as facilitators who would lead the PRA, and the consultations with the community. This was an important step for us if we wanted the project to be successful.

It's very difficult as a donor to just come and construct a borehole. Without real consultation and sensitisation with these communities, people will not utilise that thing or maintain it. People from the outside can't just go into a community and think they will change the mindset of the people. It was important that the community itself select facilitators, people who the community felt confident in. Then, they would respond quickly to the leadership of those people because they themselves chose them.”

David Mwamba, OGB: “In 2013, in Imalyo Ward, the World Bank was establishing the Pilot Project for Climate Resilience (PPCR). During the implementation of the PPCR, Natango community in Imalyo ward successfully managed its own community grant of \$50 000 (US), completing all activities that included a 20km canal clearing project, with no audit issues. Imalyo was recognised as outperforming all other wards, and became eligible to apply for a much bigger \$200 000 grant.

What's special about the story is that the community had elected a certain young lady to manage the grant, and she really did very well. She was one of the young women who had been trained through the AACES project in construction. We could not have foreseen when we did that capacity-building work that it would have inspired such confidence and leadership in her, and confidence in her by the community. She was elected, not appointed. And that's not a small thing. She was elected by the community, despite her competitors who were eager to manage the grant, and who were seniors, with previous leadership experience in the community. But her community wanted her. She beat those previous leaders 48-12."

Imalyo Ward representative: "As we were getting into AACES, our government had what we called Decentralisation of Governance. When that was introduced it gave power back to the people to declare what they want, rather than have government simply decide on services that are irrelevant to each community. The timing for this strategy coincided with AACES.

The Ward Development Committees were a concept of government, established to be the entry point for the community to interact with government. In 2015, Oxfam took the responsibility to support the development of our WDC. The Ministry of Local Government was to come in to assist in forming these WDCs by bringing in community elections to elect the WDC Executive. After elections, the committees were formed, with the duty of Oxfam to ensure that the committee has a space from which to carry out its duties. The role of the WDC was to initiate and facilitate the views of the community and forward them to the municipality, through the support of such organisations as PPS.

AACES and WASH have been major components of the work of our WDCs, and have encouraged us to set some policies that allow us to be vigilant for any barrier that would block the advancement of WASH in our communities. For instance, if people are not complying with the standards set for sanitation, they are brought to book in front of the Chief and the WDC. We expect that each household has its own toilet, that each home has a dish-rack. We want a clean environment with no open defecation. Fortunately, these standards match those developed by local government, but we had a chance to review them as a community and found them to be suitable for us. We have champions in our communities – trained facilitators we call Sanitation Action Groups – who collect information to monitor whether our WASH vision is progressing.

The process really worked for us, and a lot of it was because of the way our partners, like PPS, worked with us. They didn't just come there, and tell us what to do. Or do their own thing that we just had to accept. They started first with chiefs and leaders to form a real partnership. Champions were chosen from the communities, by the communities and exposed to trainings that sensitised them and equipped them. Those champions moved around in the community, and from village to village, making people curious, visiting families and homesteads, then zones and community gatherings. In the end, we could say that we were the ones who did the work."

KZF: "In 2013, Kanyenzi and Nyambi communities developed Ward Plans, coming up with the things they would want to see in their communities in the coming five years. They came up with their vision and plans, and elected members from among the community to serve on the WDC. Our organisation

supported these communities through capacity-building and solidarity to lobby the government to achieve the goals they had set for themselves in their plans.

In Katondo Community School there was a need for teachers. The community effectively used its Ward Plans to go to the office of the Ministry of Education, represented by selected members of the WDC. They successfully secured two government-teachers for their school. In Namando's Ward Plan, they wanted a small classroom. During the planning in the council meeting, they were given permission to utilise the government Community Development Fund to erect the classroom they needed.

In Nyambi Ward, there is a Health Centre serving many communities, but far away from many of those communities and hard to reach. Inkunikola community was three hours away from the nearest health facility. Using their Ward Plan, and the minutes of their community meeting, they made a case to get a clinic, now under construction, in that community. In Kaoma, these Ward Plans have assisted people to advocate for the integrated, coordinated efforts of duty-bearers and development partners to support the establishment of clinics, sanitation facilities and classroom blocks.

At the hospital in Luampa, we used to have a ward once used as a leprosy ward, but since that time has fallen into disrepair after the missionaries left. The Luampa District Council has managed to rehabilitate that ward and use it as a children's ward through funds from the Community Development Fund, stimulated through the use of the Ward Plans to lobby local government. Previously, we had no children's ward, and all the children had to share space with the adult women, which was not ideal."

PPS: "In 2014, after we were trained in advocacy and rights-based approaches through Oxfam, we realised that communities needed to be sensitised to rights and influencing in order to fully take ownership of the development in their own places. We organised a 3-day training for members of the WDC in Lumbo ward, focussing on advocacy: how to identify problems, and how to engage the community to analyse the problem.

After this training, the WDC was really inspired. They went flat-out in the community to conduct their own kind of research, gathering information on issues affecting life in general for members of the community. After this research, they presented their findings to the community for analysis and found that 75% of people had a similar problem.

In Tapo community, there was a small stream that had been blocked by the construction of a major multimillion dollar highway crossing the Zambezi Plains through a system of 22 bridges. The blockage of this stream caused water to flood the fields of the community. The WDC took it up, starting by engaging the traditional leaders as influencing allies to discuss the issue and plan together. As a team, they began to use radio to announce community meetings where the issue would be more broadly discussed, and an influencing campaign designed. They also secured space on the radio to air their views on the situation and to communicate their desired aim.

Together, the WDC and traditional leaders engaged the Chinese contractors, asking them to look into the issue seriously. And it wasn't too long before government duty-bearers took up the case. The campaign yielded a very good result: Chinese contractors agreed to adjust their plans to include an

extra bridge in the construction of their highway, bearing the cost within their own budgets.

Before the process of AACES, these communities would have been silent on the issue, but they had gained confidence to express their voice and influence change by engaging those in power.”

PPS: “Mutondo is a community in a very remote part of the district, about 200km from Mongu. A bridge constructed in that area a long time ago was washed away through excessive rains. As a result, Airtel, the cellular network service provider, could not reach one of its cell towers to provide it with fuel, or to conduct routine maintenance. People in that area lost access to mobile communication.

The WDC mobilised to call together people from either side of the river to debate how they would

influence Airtel and the Permanent Secretary in government to repair the tower. They engaged the traditional leaders and ward counsellor, and utilised a local radio station to make the issue public. Together, they prepared a position paper to hand over to the Permanent Secretary, outlining their expectations.

And even while they were waiting for a response, they began doing some work of their own, using local resources – maize and indigenous development funding – to engage local communities to begin work on a basic bridge. After some time, Airtel joined in the efforts, contributing to the manpower and resources, to repair the bridge. The network was restored.”



8. GOOD CONSULTATION LINKS PRIVATE SPACE TO PUBLIC SPACE

If we link consultation in the private space of the home, with the public space of the community, then everyone becomes involved. Intimacy, responsibility and solidarity come together through one process.

If we do consultation through 'mixed methods' – public consultation and private consultation (groups and home visits) – everyone becomes engaged. In public, people hear common concerns – solidarity; in private, it gives space for people to engage confidently and freely in their intimate space with no interruption.

Home is an important component of a bottom-up approach.

If you create space (allow time; proper process sequencing) for people to listen to each other's stories, to test and analyse those stories, a joint consciousness emerges that builds trust and solidarity, and allows people to identify, collectively, structural and institutional and systemic roots for their shared concerns. (Energy for action builds along a progression from individual to collective responsibility.)



PPS: "In those days, when we worked with HIV, it was very difficult to ensure those people living with the virus could be fully included and genuinely participate, especially at the community level when the village talked together about these things. So, even while we continued the community meetings and sensitisation that was more traditional, we recognised we needed a way to support participation by those who could not be free to participate at public level. We needed something that reached people at the household level. So we trained community members in counselling and psychosocial support, and they focussed on visiting individuals and families in the homes. They were there not for education; they just did visits that felt like counselling. And it really reduced stigma because it somehow made the topic of HIV common and normal. Community members started visiting each other, and that increased the coverage of our work. People revealed that most of them

had – prior to these visits – not been tested to know their status, because of a number of reasons that prevented them from going to the facilities, most of it having to do with shame and stigma and fear and secrecy."

Imalyo Ward representative: "When we first started, the community facilitators started first with chiefs and leaders, then worked with families at a household stage, then multiple households together by zone, gathered together in a central location."

KZF: "In the early part of our process, we knew we needed to do a baseline. The baseline happened in two ways: first, through door-to-door household visits, especially in areas where homes were scattered; second, through community meetings. Community facilitators came up with a work plan so that they worked in teams, village by village, not alone. And, after the home visits and community

meetings, they met together as teams to consolidate their data and analyse their findings. After a month or two, KZF, with the community facilitators, went back to the communities to share the findings of the baseline and check the accuracy of the data. Facilitators asked community members “Is this true? Does this reflect our conversation accurately?” And in those feedback meetings, people would be even more stimulated by the findings and want to add more detail.”

PPS: “In Tapo community, there is a lot of traditional beer brewing. During our community engagement processes, community members were disturbed by people coming to these meetings while drunk, and disrupting the sessions. In their talks about working together and taking responsibility together, people identified the link between GBV and alcohol.

During one meeting, a participant spontaneously disclosed “I am one of those who get drunk. I take beer and make sure that day that my wife is beaten. My family has lost confidence in me”. Through the meetings, he felt challenged to shift his behaviour to be more like other couples and families who he

realised were not living in conflict. He realised this behaviour was not going to help in any way.

He started slowly withdrawing from participating in beer drinking and increased his participation in community meetings. He found counselling support. And his relationship with his family improved. He became more trusted in his home to handle money, and not spend it recklessly buying alcohol. The relationship with his wife improved: from fear to mutual respect and trust. Responsibilities within the home changed: the husband started to take on work and contribute to the costs of the household, taking some pressure off his wife.

And now, he is a public role model, speaking publicly in community meetings to share his experience and promote anti-GBV and good marriages. He even volunteers now with a women’s group, supported through a PPS grant that reinforces their work in agriculture and food security.

He has been so transformed through the process that the community trusts him deeply, even electing him as the chairperson of the WDC.”

9. EMOTIONAL BEFORE RATIONAL

If we design our consultation process to engage the emotional before the rational (feelings before facts), people in communities are more likely to engage, participate and respond.

If we only give people information, without caring about their feelings, consultation becomes ineffective; communication breaks down.

If people feel genuinely listened to – validated, recognised, and respected – then they are more likely to gain confidence to respond and participate. Dialogue creates the space for people to feel listened to.

If people have the opportunity to express themselves – not only to listen to our information – then the space for engagement and ownership and participation is opened.

(When we only provide information, then people shut down; they keep to themselves; they don't share; the information is received, but not digested or applied.)

If we only introduce facts and information, people can resist and feel disengaged, but if we can make that information personal (what this means for me, my friends, my family), then people are more receptive and engaged.



ZPS with PPS: “The Zambian Police Service has a community services directorate. We were invited for a meeting with Oxfam to join in as partners with the AACES project. We have a unit focussed on child protection and child safety, and this seemed a good match for that objective in the project. We formed a team with PPS and began to follow their sanitation-promotion process, visiting the communities together to share life experiences and community concerns, and to discuss. And we gave input to the consultations that could open up the discussion about child safety.

Through our visits we realised there were many early marriages of girls leading to an interruption in education, as well as child labour – especially for

boys – which was compromising the children's rights to education. We began to discuss these issues with the communities from a rights perspective, and many stories came up. The community was quite knowledgeable once the conversations began, sharing many real life experiences known to them; this opened up more opportunities to name the issue more directly and publicly. At first, some of them didn't even know it was a crime. But they came to realise it and started holding each other responsible.

‘...it's our husbands...’, said some mothers, ‘giving our daughters away’.

‘No’, said some husbands and fathers, ‘it's the mothers who look after our daughters. They allow it for our daughters.’

'...these parents are pulling their children out of school to work, or to get married...' reported some teachers.

We now hear reports that communities are standing against families who are trying to marry off children. And children themselves are realising their rights.

In a community in Imalyo ward, a girl who was due to be married complained to her headmaster and neighbours. The community challenged the wedding and called the police who arrived in that village just

before the wedding took place, in time to prevent it. In Imalyo, Lukweta and Lukakanya communities, villages formed neighbourhood watch committees to monitor that children's rights are respected and not abused.

And we ourselves, as the police service, learned. We realised that we have to follow-up with the communities regularly, despite the distances. When we feel close to them, it helps them keep up their progress."

10. QUESTIONS INSTEAD OF INFORMATION; STIMULATION INSTEAD OF SOLUTIONS

If we stimulate communities with good questions, instead of providing information only, people become engaged in discussion, participation increases, and organisations gain insight into how to adapt their consultation process.

N If you go to the community with an inquisitive mind – not going with answers and information to pour into their heads – then people become more aware of what they have, their social capital, their strengths and abilities.

N If you go to the community with an inquisitive mind, then it increases people's self-efficacy and sense of self-worth. They are challenged in their assumptions that expertise is external. They realise they are trusted and that their local knowledge is respected. They begin to feel equal.

N If you go to the community with an inquisitive mind, then people stop depending on outside strengths; they acknowledge they are endowed within, and generate solutions that reflect their aspiration (hopeful, optimistic, future-focussed).

If we base our consultation process on asking questions first so as to understand the local context and experience (not start by giving education and information), then we gain insight that helps inform our strategies for engagement; questions stimulate their interest in the process, and help us know what people want to know.

If we base our consultation on asking questions first, not giving information, then it stimulates more questions; people become curious to know more and start inviting information, and are keen to come together.

If consultation starts first with questions, not information, the right questions allow people to explore their own experiences and identify with the issues in a personal way. Then people begin to engage with and resolve their own questions.

If we stimulate, rather than simply educate through information, people become more interested in learning more, and invite consultation.



Village Water Zambia: “Village Water Zambia has helped to establish sanitation committees in schools. The process undertaken with them is not training or infrastructure, it’s not about education to increase knowledge or correct practices and attitudes, as if people don’t know anything. We see our role, rather, as trying to ignite what they do know.

In Tuwambwa School, for instance, we walk into the classroom and begin discussion with teachers and learners. We curiously ask questions about all kinds of things – sanitation behaviours, nutrition, hand-washing – and walk around the school environment together thinking about those same things at some physical locations. We try to stimulate conversation that surfaces the gaps between what people know and how people behave.

And we provide no answers, only questions. We let the community decide, because we believe they know best.

‘And now, what do we do about that?’

‘And who will provide that?’

‘Where will those resources come from?’

‘Where else would we be able to use this solution?’

We’ve seen how this approach takes our structural interventions (like sanitation at school) and expands its impact. Because of the simple way we do discussion, learners themselves are carrying those questions back to their homes and influencing their families. If they can experience better sanitation and hygiene at school, they recognise that they can continue that experience at home.”

11. RELATIONSHIP AND TRUST

If we have established a relationship and trust with communities, they participate more freely in discussion and dialogue without suspicion or a sense of interrogation. Consultation is not an event; it is part of an ongoing conversation in the community.

If we create space and time to establish real relationships and trust with communities, then development processes can become genuinely community-led, and we are able to move together.

If we establish trust with people through relationships, then they are more free and willing to participate in consultation – it is part of an ongoing conversation. (Without relationships, people begin to feel interrogated and suspicious and resistant to conversation.)

If we have an existing programme (relationship, trust, integrity, quality), it facilitates easier implementation of new processes, and smoother consultation. A good start generates a good ending. It matters how we start.



KZF: "Practical interventions and construction of latrines in our community only started happening in 2012/2013. But the AACES programme started in 2011. We used that first year as a year of getting ready: an important step for us.

We needed to conduct a baseline process in the community as part of doing consultation. We met with the district council as the institution we were going to work with. We agreed together on how the project was going to be implemented. We went together with members of the council (and Oxfam and the Ministry of Health) to visit traditional leaders and introduce the idea, wanting to hear from them if they were willing to accommodate the project in their community.

The chiefs called a community meeting and informed the community that they need to select members as focal people for this work. Community members then selected from themselves people

they wanted to represent them to conduct the PRA. We took time to explain that participating in the project was voluntary and for the benefit of the community. There were no stipends or volunteer allowances.

After selection, a training was facilitated jointly by KZF, Oxfam and the Minister of Health to enable facilitators to conduct the PRA. Twenty one facilitators were trained, six of these women, and there was an attempt, from the beginning of the project, to be inclusive and conscious of gender. Most of the community activities typically leave women out, along with people with disability.

We saw that through the PRA, the work was not going to be completed by that first group of facilitators. Looking at the work and distances to be covered, the facilitators themselves reported feeling overloaded. This created demand for more support.

Once again, community members selected new facilitators and a community-based training happened. KZF supported the process with stationery and logistics, but this second-round training was co-facilitated by the first round facilitators themselves who, by now, had experience and skill to transfer to new facilitators.

It was a slower way to start than moving straight to implementing activities, but we saw the first stage as an important investment in building relationship with the communities so they trust us, and knew we respected them and their choices.”

12. INCLUSION

If we make provision in our activities to accommodate the needs of people during public consultation (e.g. childcare), then they feel included; inclusion leads to greater participation.

If you want to include people, then you have to make provision for the circumstances (logistics, environment etc.) that enable inclusion.

If people who are themselves the subject of marginalisation are enabled to participate as part of a team, they express their capabilities and leadership in ways that challenge the attitudes, assumptions and behaviours of others towards them.



KZF: “Before WASH, life was not good for those living with disabilities in this district; they were really disadvantaged. As a blind man, I was eagerly happy to join KZF. And in 2015, I began working with them to sensitise communities. In community meetings we’d ask “do you have people with disabilities in your homes, and where are they at this meeting? Why are they not here with the rest of the community?”. People would tell us “even if they came, what are they going to do here?”

In Namando, we went to conduct a sensitisation, and discovered a number of disabled children in the villages, not going to school. One parent shared how they wanted to bring their daughter to school, but teachers felt they did not know how to handle her. They felt that she could not be educated just because of her physical disability.

I shared my story of living with disability, of being blind and still gaining an education, and convinced the teachers that it was only a mobility issue for this girl. KZF assisted to secure a wheelchair, and she is now attending school.

Broadly, attitudes are changing. From early 2015, self-help groups were formed in Namando, Nyambi, Mulwa wards. Community members come together in a group of 5-15 people as a savings group, a village bank, giving each other small loans and generating interest. These groups also generate income to allow the community to repair and maintain WASH facilities. Each of the 36 savings groups now includes people living with disability who would normally not have participated before because people were not seen to have value or a contribution to make.”

13. INTEGRATION

If we work in an integrated way, looking at the 'broad whole' – not only on separate 'special parts' – then complex development outcomes at community level become more achievable and sustainable.

N If we integrate rights-awareness and human-rights based approaches into our project work, the people with whom we work go beyond implementing development activities towards advocating for their rights and the rights of others, even when it challenges culture and tradition.

N If we integrate service-delivery and development with rights work, people gain confidence to engage with power and disrupt the status quo.

N When we think as generalists, not only as specialists, then the process for our work with communities (how we work) becomes as important as the content of our work (what we work on), if not more important.

N When we move as a team with other stakeholders - connected across sectors through an interdisciplinary, integrated approach – we overcome barriers to access, to reach and to uptake.

N If we work in an integrated way that focuses on building community cohesion and participation, one issue (e.g. sanitation) can become the entry-point to achieving multiple outcomes on many issues at home, family, neighbourhood, civic and institutional levels.

If we simply integrate programs and content without paying careful attention to process, then outcomes are diluted and difficult to distinguish or attribute.



David Mwamba, OGB: "Many of us as development workers have very specialist, technical skills that sometimes pigeonhole us. Just because you have specialist training doesn't mean you only have to think in your speciality. Even though you are trained as a specialist, and you are an expert in that area, you have to think in a broad integrated way. For example, WASH was thematic and specific, but we had to also think about how we

use this special focus to look at other components of development. We must realise that communities don't live their lives in sectors. They live in an integrated way. Everything matters to them, because all those things add up in the life they live."

KZF: "School Health and Nutrition Clubs (SHN) were an initiative of the government. The concept was well described on paper, but the clubs were

not functioning well through lack of resources, and even then only in some areas. When WASH started with sensitisation in schools, some teachers were selected by their schools to be trained as SHN coordinators, forming SHN clubs in schools to educate learners about sanitation. When the clubs started operating in seven schools, the trained APMs worked to rehabilitate boreholes at the schools, the linkage facilitated through KZF.

The SHN Clubs went on to form another committee – VWASH – that was made up of pupils and parents who would travel to villages to stimulate them and encourage them to build toilets, introduce CLTS and hand-washing facilities. The whole idea was that after learners were educated and changed their behaviour at school, this should continue at home. Positive behaviour at school needed to continue at home in order for it to become normal and consistent. When we went around the villages for WASH, we heard lots of stories of girls getting pregnant and leaving school, or boys leaving school to start working. We realised that it wasn't enough to only deal with WASH. We partnered with YWCA (working on GBV) and the police (working on child protection) to start sensitising the community on other issues. Both parents and children became more aware of the rights of children, and some things began to change.

Before the process, the enrolment in school was quite low, due to early marriages. WASH was an entry-point for us to address gender-based violence and child safety which has improved the enrolments in our schools as fewer young girls are being given into marriage by their families, and fewer young boys are leaving school in order to start working.

In Namando, the school there is one of those schools where there is a child who is now attending

school in a wheelchair. In Nooki in 2015, as we were doing sensitisation, communities came out to say there were some children – twins – from the Chief's home who, instead of going to school were being kept in the house for initiation ceremonies to prepare them for marriage. Together with the police and YWCA, the community took action to influence the Chief to release the girls to go back to school."

PPS: "In Tapo community, there is a lot of traditional beer brewing. During our community engagement processes, community members were disturbed by people coming to these meetings while drunk, disrupting the sessions. In their talks about working together and taking responsibility together, people identified the link between GBV and alcohol.

During one meeting, a participant spontaneously disclosed 'I am one of those who get drunk. I take beer and make sure that day that my wife is beaten. My family has lost confidence in me'. Through the meetings he felt challenged to shift his behaviour to be more like other couples and families who he realised were not living in conflict. He realised this behaviour was not going to help in any way.

He started slowly withdrawing from participating in beer drinking and increased his participation in community meetings. He found counselling support. And his relationship with his family improved. He became more trusted in his home to handle money, and not spend it recklessly buying alcohol. The relationship with his wife improved: from fear to mutual respect and trust. Responsibilities within the home changed: the husband started to take on work and contribute to the costs of the household, taking some pressure off his wife.

And now, he is a public role model, speaking publicly in community meetings to share his experience

and promote anti-GBV and good marriages. He even volunteers now with a women's group, supported through a PPS grant that reinforces their work in agriculture and food security. He has been so transformed through the process that the community trusts him deeply, even electing him as the chairperson of the WDC."

PPS: "After the communities were becoming more aware of children's rights, a man in Lukweta forced himself on a 13-year old girl. The girl came running home, crying, and the parents reported the case to the Community Child Protection committee. The CPC with the parents came to Mongu town seeking medical care for the child and justice from the police. The police informed PPS that they wanted to get the culprit but didn't have the fuel to travel the 180km to reach there. PPS supported with fuel, and the police were able to act on the complaint, capture the suspect and arrest him, leading to his conviction. Before community consultation through the AACES project, such things were happening all the time, but were accepted as normal. The family would not have reported the crime, but would simply have negotiated with the defiler to pay a penalty. They behaved differently in this case because they had a better understanding of rights.

Prior to sensitisation, Lukweta school reported six girls married off in previous years, removed from schooling. There was also an increasing number of teenage pregnancies. Since the process began in the communities, we have been monitoring the situation, and no more girls have been married off.

In that same community, a mother gave birth to twins and removed her young daughter from school to assist to care for the babies. Following

sensitisation, the community was much more aware of the rights of the girl, and influenced that mother to reverse her decision and return the girl to school.

In Matonga, a 13 year old girl was married off to a 27 year old man. The girl, traumatised by the demands of her husband, ran back home, but was threatened with violence from her parents who chased her back. She endured the abuse – sexually abused by night, pressed into demanding domestic work by day – until she couldn't continue any longer, and ran away a second time. Again, her parents threatened to beat her unless she returned to the husband. The girl reported her own case to the traditional leaders in the village who put pressure on the family to return the dowry to the husband so the girl could be set free."

Zambia Police Service (ZPS), Mongu: "If we had not worked with PPS and their approach, we would not have worked in this consultative way. We would have just used a radio and loudspeakers, broadcasting child safety messages to the community as we drove through a village. But no one would pay attention.

Before, we never really discussed with the community. We found out from them only after this consultative process that our information-only approach wasn't changing their behaviour. It wasn't stimulating them to acknowledge issues or talk to each other about those issues. Tradition was more powerful than information. Information didn't change their conscience. And, by reputation alone, if we'd gone in alone as police and law enforcement, the turnout by the community would be small. People would be afraid of us and would avoid us."

Processes that unlock imagination about the future, aspiration, dreams for the future and optimism build hopefulness. Hope is a factor that stimulates response in people and communities.





CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

This publication supports the case made in the first volume of this series on facilitating active civic engagement: that good practice in development is characterised by communities taking action, and by organisations responsibly and respectfully supporting that action through facilitation of both community response and civil society solidarity.

Volume Two expands on this argument, venturing a number of supplementary observations from which to build a more robust analysis of response, facilitative practice and development results.

1. Human agency – the capacity innate in human beings to think, to choose, to will, to act from their own volition – makes it possible for individuals and communities to respond in life. People and the communities of which they are a part have the capacity to be the subject of their own response, rather than the object of some other external force or intention; they can be that which acts, rather than the thing acted upon.
2. Human response, especially in difficult conditions and environments, can be made easier - smoother - through facilitation, supportively administered by organisations at different levels of operation and relationship to individuals and communities.
3. Participation, inclusion and agency are not inadvertent, secondary outcomes of a development process. Nor are they only a means to a traditional or technical health or development outcome. They are, themselves, core indicators and outcomes of a development process, specifically because human capacity is being developed.
4. Public health and community development projects are more effective with higher, longer-lasting impact when 'soft' human development outcomes are achieved as complements to the outcomes of 'hard' technical interventions.
5. Good consultation drives a more comprehensive process towards public participation and public accountability. It is possible to systematically facilitate consultation so that it catalyses deepening levels of responsiveness in households and communities. Ultimately, getting consultation right early on is a strategic springboard to achieving active civic engagement by ordinary people in the environments where they live.
6. Response spreads – a product of deepening participation and growing social cohesion – sometimes exceeding the pace or anticipated scope and range of planned project activities.⁶ One successfully responding household or one responding community has the capability to influence movement in others, transferring vision and energy for action. In as much as there are vectors for the spread of disease, could community-driven participation be a vector for the expansion of responses for relational health between multiple communities?
7. The strongest movement was stimulated where facilitators practiced appreciative approaches in relation to people and communities, resisting the urge to plan and decide on behalf of the seemingly less informed or under-educated. The facilitator's assumption is capacity, that everyone can think, and

it appears to unlock the capability and confidence of communities to figure out a way forward. Could it follow then to suggest that, developmentally speaking, work done to support and strengthen the internal locus of control – the sense of self-efficacy in individuals and collectives – coupled with increased knowledge of rights, leads to increased engagement and better informed choice for the exercise of personal power?

8. Processes that unlock imagination about the future, aspiration, dreams for the future and optimism build hopefulness. Hope is a factor that stimulates response in people and communities.
9. People and communities respond well to the support, stimulus and facilitation of organisations that position themselves as learners alongside communities, not as instructors. Curiosity and an inquisitive mind are useful qualities to cultivate in organisations who are intent on being effective facilitators of community responses within the development sector.
10. The correlation between increasing social cohesion and progress through the cycle of responsiveness

suggests that development of this nature is, at least in part, relationally driven. Individual attention and interest are captured through consultation, but as participation deepens, individuals draw together into a collective, and draw others into their wake. It may be considered that the corollary is also true: when efforts are made to strengthen the relational health and wellness of a community, isolated individuals find a supportive solidarity to think and act together, leading to participation, joint ownership and collective action.

11. The principles of response explored in the Theory of Change, and the practice of facilitation by organisations arose initially from the NHI-Accountability Project, described in Volume One of this series as an exercise in participatory health policy engagement. Volume Two, however, demonstrates a continuity of many of these principles and practices, suggesting they are transferable beyond process-driven development into more typical service-delivery paradigms such as the delivery of water, sanitation and hygiene.

It is a promising consideration that these same principles and practices, the same mechanisms behind the movement and expansion of human and community responsiveness, might apply to yet other areas of development: stigma-reduction, treatment access, improved health facility service utilisation, gender-based violence, post-conflict reconciliation, health facility and health service revitalisation, or substance abuse.

ENDNOTES

- 1 The first version of these steps originated in 2015 as project implementers of the NHI-Accountability Project (discussed in Volume One of this series of publications) reflected on their practice, some two years following its conclusion. Through that analysis, a framework emerged reflecting fundamental elements of their approach as Intermediaries in that specific project. These elements were, in fact, logical and sequential, although they had not been consciously implemented in that way at the time of the project.

For this second volume, literature review and a similar narrative process with representatives of Oxfam Australia in South Africa and Oxfam Great Britain in Zambia yielded an abundance of stories about Oxfam's role in the project through the AACES programme. These stories clustered similarly around the same essential steps distilled in Volume One, reinforcing that theory of approach.

- 2 It must be noted that – for instance, in Zambia – many of these community-based partnerships and relationships were already in place in some form prior to AACES. Continuity of relationship and connection extended over time, across previous projects, so that consultation with

communities and participatory engagement with community-based partner organisations was becoming more normal practice for Oxfam GB as an intermediary. Consultation was no longer an initial event, it was an ongoing process. In the Zambian experience, in several implementing locations, communities and community-based partners were included as early in this sequence of steps as STEP ONE – joint analysis of the context – and throughout subsequent stages, naturally, as an ideal situation to optimise active civic engagement. STEP FOUR, in that case, represented an expansion, a concentration, an intensification, of themes within the broader context of community consultation (e.g. integrating child protection, disability-inclusion and gender).

- 3 Zambia's experience extends this STEP FOR INTERMEDIARIES by one more level: the Intermediary organisation in Zambia (Oxfam GB) sought to work not only to activate local communities and civil society or community-based organisations, or to make government a target. It also strategised to, simultaneously, engage early on with administrative structures and systems in government, offering opportunity to connect

state interests to community interests, and broker relationship and synergy.

- 4 In 2012, Moeti Kgare undertook two research assignments commissioned through Oxfam Australia in South Africa, linked to the NHI-Accountability Project discussed in Volume 1 of this series of publications. He reviewed the National Health Act, mapping out any legal provisions that were in place for public participation, and tried to understand how these were framed, what the roles and responsibilities were for various stakeholders and actors, and whether any provisions were made in the law for how public participation should work. Finding that such provision was made, Moeti went on to conduct a study to test the functional operation of these structures (clinic committees and hospital boards as provisions for participation) in two health districts, exploring whether this legislative framework actually applied in practice. He found that most of these structures had not been formed in health facilities as prescribed in the Health Act and that, where they were formed, they were not functional. Much as in this Zambian scenario guidelines existed, but the structures were not in
- 5 place owing to insufficient resourcing to enable them to operate.
- 5 As has already been stated in the introduction to 'PRACTICES', from the inception of the AACES project, Zambian partners explicitly aimed to use WASH as an entry-point to promote civic engagement and accountability of duty-bearers, and to do so in a coordinated way between partners. South African partners, by contrast, focussed more on incorporating elements of water, sanitation and hygiene programming into their existing localised programme and service-delivery work, with less explicit intent on influencing work until much later in the programme. This difference in original intention, design and practice makes Zambia an ideal point of reference from which to extract principles of approach for facilitating active civic engagement.
- 6 As is evident in communities in Zambia, where neighbouring villages began applying CLTS principles and constructing latrines, modifying personal sanitation behaviour, seemingly spontaneously without being directly engaged by the project, or being beneficiaries of any implemented activity.

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“When we started, on this giant river of AACES, we battled along in what was essentially a dug-out canoe. It was too tough. So we had to jump out of that boat that we were paddling. Imagine that – we jumped out of the boat INTO the river itself! People on the banks kept looking at us in the first two years of this ambitious project, asking when we were going to start implementing. But, we HAD started. We had got into the river.

And we were looking for other people in that river who would join us.”

– David Mwamba, Oxfam WASH Program Manager, Zambia

This publication is the second in a series exploring the principles and practices for effectively facilitating active civic engagement, focussing on the character and effect of participation, and the behaviour of facilitation.

It draws directly on the experience of those organisations and communities engaged in water, sanitation and hygiene work (WASH) in partnership with Oxfam through the Australia Africa Community Engagement Scheme (AACES), a project implemented in Zambia and South Africa between 2011 and 2016.

Winding its way through pit latrines and floodplains, through village school clubs and widows’ savings groups, past Chinese contractors and bridges, from the World Bank to the seats of rural local government, stretching between Africa and Australia, these stories of ordinary people, making extraordinary progress, in the places they call home, might offer insight to programmers and policy makers about approaches that stimulate responsiveness in citizens and communities and enable more confident expressions of their civic voice and agency.

Sustainable change is almost always hard-won. Development implementers – often paddling upstream through unpredictable currents – can take the first step to cease the striving that too often comes with intervention: to climb out of the boat of their own uncertain devising, and step into the river where the action is. To risk, and trust the tide. To participate, and find in that place, others who have learned to navigate the river through more familiar channels, sufficiently provoked by their presence to journey new courses together.

