

A young man with dark hair, wearing a white button-down shirt, is smiling broadly while holding a green plastic cup. He is standing next to a white water dispenser with a blue water bottle. The background shows a room with colorful bunting and posters on the wall.

How to conduct
**A WASH ACCESSIBILITY
AND SAFETY AUDIT**

The Royal Government of Cambodia is committed to achieving universal access to sanitation and drinking water by 2025. To realise this goal everyone in the country needs to be able to access these services. An Accessibility and Safety Audit is a simple yet powerful tool to assist the people responsible for WASH programming to make these services inclusive for everyone, including people with a disability, older people, women and children.

This document explains how to conduct an accessibility and safety audit and the experiences of one local organisation, Disability Development Services Program (DDSP) in Pursat in using this tool

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WHAT IS AN ACCESSIBILITY AND SAFETY AUDIT?

An accessibility and safety audit is a participatory methodology to evaluate the level of accessibility and safety of existing water and/or sanitation facility and its surrounds, and to identify possible changes or improvements. The audit identifies simple changes to facilities and their surrounds that can improve their usability for a wide range of users, thus avoiding the need for separate ‘special’ provision. The audit is a way for stakeholders to consider any risks to safety from using the facilities and to consider if anything can be done to reduce the risks.

Accessibility and safety audits are a good way to engage with Disabled People’s Organisations. A WASH organisation can partner with a DPO, invite them to participate in each stage of the process, including the training and when doing the accessibility and safety audit. This means that you hear directly from people with disabilities on what their barriers to accessing WASH are, and also builds DPO’s knowledge of WASH.



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HOW TO CONDUCT AN ACCESSIBILITY AND SAFETY AUDIT

Below are the key steps in a participatory barrier analysis and the experiences of DDSP in using this methodology.

Step
1

Partner with a local DPO

Step
2

Selecting the facilities to be assessed and forming a team

Identify the water and/or sanitation facilities to be assessed in the audit. This may be a household level facility, a community facility of water and sanitation facilities inside public buildings.

Form a team of people to undertake the audit. The team should be diverse comprising men and women of different ages, people with a disability and a range of impairments, older people and people from the responsible institution (if considering public buildings).

DDSP decided to focus the audit on accessibility of the latrines for people with disability in public buildings and selected the office of the Provincial Department of Rural Development and the Red Cross Branch Office in Pursat. DDSP requested permission from these two organisations to conduct the audit and invited them to join the team.

DDSP formed a team of wheelchair users, blind people, people with stiff-foot, pregnant women, a dedicated minute taker, interviewer and measurer. This diverse team could identify and demonstrate different types of barriers in using the facilities.

Step

3

Train the team on how to conduct the audit

Explain the process of undertaking the audit, assign roles to each team member and gather together all the equipment needed to undertake the audit.

DDSP provided a short training session on disability before introducing the audit to the team. Clear roles were assigned for taking notes, taking measurements and asking questions.

DDSP gathered the following materials: tape measure, wheelchair, note book/butcher paper & pen, crutches, camera, rope, blindfold and toilet.

Step

4

Assess the journey to the facility

The audit team moves to the latrine/bathroom (by walking and or wheelchair) and identifies problems which make it difficult to get there. They look out for issues such as:

- ❖ Is the path or corridor too narrow or too steep?
- ❖ Are there steps there and they too high?
- ❖ Are there any parts of the area which make girls, women or children feel unsafe when using it? If so why?

A detailed checklist of questions and template for recording is provided at the end of this document.

Take photographs and make drawings as you go. You can carry a tape measure to measure the width of doors.

Step

5

Assess the facility

Request different users to attempt to get into and show how they can/cannot use the facility. Make a note of who can use it and who cannot, and what features make it difficult to use.

Features which make the facility easy to use, and which make it difficult may include:

- ❖ Size of door (height, width) – toilet entrance
- ❖ Size of toilet
- ❖ Type of toilet
- ❖ Height of mirror
- ❖ Height washing basin and location of soap and hanging
- ❖ Space inside the toilet/bathroom
- ❖ Handrails/walking bar
- ❖ Light inside the toilet/bathroom
- ❖ Distance and height of cleaning facilities
- ❖ Door handles and locks that can easily reaching
- ❖ Ramps to the toilet/bathroom entrance
- ❖ Floor inside the toilet

Having identified the problems, make suggestions for changes and improvements as you go along.





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The team with DDSP identified the following barriers in using the latrines in the two institutions:

- ❖ No direction signs showing location of the latrines
- ❖ Narrow door entrances (width: 64cm, height: 167cm)
- ❖ Small room (e.g. size: 160cm x 190cm)
- ❖ Not enough space inside toilet to turn around wheelchair
- ❖ No ramps and walking bar/handrail
- ❖ The shower is too high (height: 170cm)
- ❖ The anal cleansing hose is too high to be reached from wheelchair
- ❖ Dark inside and no air flowing in and out
- ❖ Mirror is positioned too high
- ❖ No toilet seat with handrails
- ❖ No water storage and sink causing bad smell and nowhere to wash hands
- ❖ Smooth tiles are slippery when wet making them dangerous to use for both able bodied and disabled people.

Step

6

Developing solutions

Immediately after the audit the team should meet together as a group to share their ideas on the solutions. Refer back to notes for any suggestions that were made during the audit.

Once a list of potential solutions have been identified, consider these in more detail.

Discussion could include:

- ❖ Are the suggested solutions realistic?
- ❖ Can you group solutions into short-term (immediately doable), medium term (require some planning) and long-term (require consultation, planning and resources)?
- ❖ Which aspects of the audit worked well, and which did not work so well?
- ❖ Could this Accessibility and Safety Audit be used again and where and how does it need to be adapted for use in the future?

The DDSP team focussed their discussion on the features of an accessible latrine and agreed the following points:

CHECKLIST AND TEMPLATE¹ TO USE TO RECORD INFORMATION

Use the attached checklist to remind you of the kind of features to look for, ignore any that are not relevant, and add things that are missing.

1. Getting there:

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Suggested changes:

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CHECKLIST

- ❖ Distance from house to latrine or from door of building to latrine
- ❖ What is the path/ access route made of?
- ❖ Is the path wide enough for all disabled users (recommended min width 90cm)?
- ❖ Is the path level and firm, with nothing to trip up? Is the path surface slippery when either dry or wet? Are there obstacles that block the path, or make it easy to trip especially for visually impaired people (up to 2m above floor level)? Is the path clear of branches of trees and bushes?
- ❖ Can a blind person follow the path? E.g. clear surface texture, landmarks or guide rail?
- ❖ Are slopes too steep? (Recommended max 1 in 10). Is the surface of the slope slippery or non-slip?
- ❖ If used at night, is the path lit?
- ❖ Are there any parts of the path which make adolescent girls, women or children feel unsafe when using it? If so why?

2. Getting in/on/out:

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Suggested changes:

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CHECKLIST

Steps:

- ❖ Are they even or uneven, firm or broken, non-slip or slippery?
- ❖ Are they at a suitable height? (recommended max 15 – 17 cm each step)
- ❖ Is there a hand-rail for support?

Entrance:

- ❖ Is there a flat platform in front of the door? Is it wide enough for a wheelchair user to enter? (recommended min width 80cm)

¹ 2014 WEDC and WaterAid : Accessibility and Safety Audit tool

- ❖ Is the difference in height between inside and outside level, or a maximum 17cm?
- ❖ Is the door easy to open by someone with weak hands?
- ❖ Does door open inwards or outwards?
- ❖ Can the user close the door easily from inside?
- ❖ Is the door easy to lock and unlock?
- ❖ If someone faced harassment or other safety risks when using the facility would they be able to safely get away from the facility?

3. Safety of use

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CHECKLIST

Feeling safe when using the latrine:

- ❖ Do all groups of people feel safe when using the latrine? Particularly ask adolescent girls, women and children of different ages.
- ❖ Are there any particular times of day or night when adolescent girls, women or children feel less safe?
- ❖ Is there any way that men or boys can easily see inside the women / girls' latrines?
- ❖ How far is the women's latrine located from the men's latrine? Do men and boys hang around outside the women's latrine?

Management and maintenance:

- ❖ If there is a caretaker or cleaner do they make adolescent girls, women and children feel safe when they use the latrine by the way they behave?

Improvements:

- ❖ How would the users suggest the facility design or management could be improved to make it feel safer to use?

4. Inside (draw a plan on a separate page to show dimensions and layout viewed from above)

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Suggested changes/improvements:

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CHECKLIST

Space inside:

- ❖ Total internal dimensions (width, length)
- ❖ Distance from door to front of toilet pan/hole
- ❖ Width & height of toilet pan
- ❖ Distance on each side of toilet pan to each side wall
- ❖ Does the layout of the toilet allow space for a wheelchair/ crutch user or a user and helper? (Draw the layout on a plan diagram)

Floor:

- ❖ What is it made of? Is it even, or uneven, firm or unstable, slippery or non-slip? Does it appear to be easy to clean?

Light:

- ❖ When the door is closed is there enough light to see the toilet hole and footplates?

Windows and roof:

- ❖ Do these provide adequate privacy for women and girls using the latrine? Can anyone see inside when standing on neighbouring roofs?

5. Support structures

Suggested changes/improvements:

CHECKLIST

Describe:

- ❖ Is it a squatting or sitting latrine?
- ❖ If squatting: is there something to hold onto when squatting? Rails/ rope etc. materials, finish, position, height, etc. (Draw their position on a plan.)

Seat (if there is one):

- ❖ Describe materials, finish, dimensions, fixed/moveable, size of hole.
- ❖ Is it easy to use, easy to clean? Why? Why not?

6 Water/anal cleansing materials (availability)

Suggested changes/improvements:

CHECKLIST

- ❖ Is there an internal water point? Describe.
- ❖ Can it be reached from squatting/sitting? If not, what is the source and how far is it from the latrine?
- ❖ Are anal cleansing materials easily available?
- ❖ Are there disposal facilities for anal cleansing materials?

7. Disposal facilities for sanitary protection materials (availability and functioning)

CHECKLIST

- ❖ Is there a system for discrete disposal of sanitary protection wastes?
- ❖ Is there a container with a close fitting lid for used materials to be put into?
- ❖ Are the containers used?
- ❖ Are the containers emptied regularly? Is someone responsible for emptying and cleaning the containers?

- ❖ Is there an agreed and safe location for the final disposal of the wastes (for example incineration, burying or disposal into municipal waste collection systems)?

8. Hand washing:

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Suggested changes/improvements:

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CHECKLIST

- ❖ Is water available for hand washing?
- ❖ Is soap or ash available?
- ❖ Can it be easily reached by all users – including small children?
- ❖ Is there somewhere for the water to be disposed of that keeps the surroundings hygienic and from becoming slippery?
- ❖ Are the boys and girls hand-washing facilities separate and away from each other (to allow privacy for girls managing their menses)?

9. Other issues (Please add anything further)

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Interviews with local users

10. Persons interviewed:

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11. Who uses the facility?

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12. Who can use it easily?

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13. Are there people who would like to use it but cannot, or have difficulty?

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14. Have there ever been incidents where women, adolescent girls, children or others have faced harassment or other safety threats when using the facility? If so describe the problems that have occurred. Also ask if there are any ideas as to how this could be prevented in the future?

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15. Please add any additional information or comments.

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