Accessibility and Safety Audit: Water point

The purpose of the audit is to examine a water facility, and

a) Find out if a physically vulnerable person[1] is able to use the facility independently.
b) Identify which features make it easy to use, and which features make it difficult to use by a physically vulnerable person.
c) Find out if there are any safety concerns around using the facility, particularly for adolescent girls, women and children of different ages.
d) Make suggestions for changes/improvements to the facility or its surrounds to improve accessibility and to reduce any safety risks identified.
e) Involve the users in the design of facilities.

A. Allocation of tasks

Appoint a co-ordinator (if you haven't already). Assign or ask for volunteers for relevant recording tasks: note-taker, measuring dimensions, drawing diagrams, taking photographs, etc. (Team members may do more than one task).

Names of team members	***Equipment needed***
Co-ordinator	Note-book & pen
Interviewer	Note-book & pen
Note-taker	Note-book & pen
Measurer	Tape measure
Drawer of diagrams	Note-book & pencil, eraser
Photographer	Camera

2. Water point - general details

1. Type of water point ……..
2. Location /Address …….

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3. Name of implementing organisation/individual……
4. Accommodation: ☐ owned ☐ rented ☐ other (specify)……..
5. Geographic location: ☐ rural ☐ urban ☐ peri-urban ☐ village ☐ farm ☐ flat ☐ hilly ☐

   (Please describe) ……..
6. General description of water point, including materials, technology used.

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7. Draw a diagram (on a separate sheet) a) from above and b) from the side, to show dimensions of the facility and surround.

[1] This might be a frail elderly woman or man, a small child, a heavily pregnant woman, a wheelchair user or person with difficulty walking, someone who is visually impaired, with weak grip, a broken leg, a limb amputation, the list is endless.

C. *Accessibility and safety*

Different users now attempt to use the water point. Make a note of who can use it and who cannot, and what features make it difficult to use. 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.

7. Getting there: ……..……....

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Suggested changes: ……

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Checklist

Distance: How far is it from home(s)/classroom to water point?

Access route:

- Is the route outside or inside?
- If used at night, is the path lit?
- What is the path/ access route made of?
- Is the path wide enough for all users? (recommended minimum width 90cm)
- Is the path level and firm, with nothing to trip up? Is the surface of the path slippery when either dry or wet? Are there obstacles that make it difficult to get past, or easy to trip up, especially for visually impaired people? (e.g. vegetation, rubbish, up to 2m above floor level).
- Are there any parts of the path which make women or children feel unsafe when using it? If so why?
- Are there landmarks that a blind/visually impaired person can follow, e.g. clear surface texture, landmarks or guide rail?
- If there is a slope or ramp, how steep is it? (Recommended maximum 1 in 12)[2]. Is the surface of the slope slippery or non-slip?

8. Getting in/on/out:

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Suggested changes: ……

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[2] See Jones & Reed (2005, p.48-49) for ramp gradients and lengths.

Checklist

- If there are steps, are they a height that disabled/ elderly people can manage? (recommended max 15 – 17 cm each step).
- Are the steps even or uneven, firm or broken, non-slip or slippery?
- Is there a hand-rail for support?
- What is the difference in height between surrounding area and platform/ apron? Can a wheelchair or crutch user easily enter/ get on?
- If there is a door or gate, does it open inwards or outwards?
- How easy is it to unlock and open the door/ gate? e.g. by someone with weak grip?
- If there is an entrance, is it wide enough for a wheelchair user to enter? (recommended minimum width 80cm)
- If someone faced harassment or other safety risks when using the facility would they be able to get away safely from the area?

9. Usability: ……..

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Suggested changes: ……

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Checklist

- What is the floor made of? Is the floor even, or uneven, firm or unstable, slippery or non-slip?
- If there is a concrete surround/ apron, measure the dimensions (width – side to side, length front to back).
- Can the user get close enough to use the water point?
- Is there a flat platform for the user to sit or stand whilst drawing water?
- Is there something for the user to lean on while drawing water?
- Can the user easily reach the operating mechanism (handle/ tap/ rope/ water surface)? If not why not?
- Is there a place to stand the water container? Can the user easily lift the filled water container and carry it?

D Interviews

10. Who uses the facility?

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11. Can they use it easily?

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

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13. 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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12. Please add any additional information or comments.

This tool is part of the toolkit:

House, Sarah, Suzanne Ferron, Marni Sommer and Sue Cavill (2014) *Violence, Gender & WASH: A Practitioner's Toolkit – Making water, sanitation and hygiene safer through improved programming and services.* London, UK: WaterAid/SHARE.

It has been adapted from: Jones, H (2012) *Accessibility Audit: Water Point.* WEDC, Loughborough University, UK. https://wedc-knowledge.lboro.ac.uk/collections/equity-inclusion