

Barriers to access to sanitation for people who are vulnerable and marginalized and non discrimination approaches



Overview

- Disabled people and their families are more likely to experience economic and social disadvantage compared to those without a disability
- Within ten years, there will be one billion older people worldwide
- A lack of sanitation can exacerbate poverty for people living with a chronic illness
- A lack of sanitation affects women and girls disproportionately



Cecelia Mujinda, Zambia

Environmental barriers

- Inadequate services force some physically disabled people to crawl on the floor to use a toilet or defecate in the open.
- “The toilet at the school is not clean. I get out of my wheelchair and then go on my hands. When I see some dirt in the toilet I don’t use it. If I was not disabled I could go to the toilet anywhere. It is very painful not to go to the toilet.” (Ethiopian girl, aged 15)



Alyaka (15 years old), using a traditional pit latrine Ethiopia

Attitudinal barriers

- “People don’t really let us share the latrines with them because they think we are dirty and think we usually dirty their latrines, so the bush is the only place we opt to go to” (Ugandan informant).
- Being viewed as ‘dirty’ by the wider community, may negatively affect people’s dignity and ability or desire to take part in community activities.
- “There was big discrimination by the society and I stayed at home. My family sent my sisters and brothers to school but they kept me at home because they were ashamed of me. I was hiding myself too.” (Alyaka, 15 years old, Ethiopia)
- This can lead to lower self esteem and limited willingness to assert their rights.

Institutional barriers

- A lack of information and understanding on the cause of illness or a condition can lead to stigma, shame and exclusion.
- A lack of information and accessible formats about low cost sanitation options.
- People do not know what is possible
- People who are vulnerable and marginalized are often excluded from decision-making processes that can directly affect their lives.
- Policies and standards are often not enforced, or do not include the needs of everyone.

Addressing environmental barriers

- Wider entrances, clearly defined paths, internal support rails, an optional toilet seat and room for a wheelchair user and a carer to turn around inside the toilet.
- Toilets with facilities to safely dispose of menstrual waste
- Involving people who are vulnerable and marginalised in the total project cycle, including an access audit can ensure the facilities are accessible for all.



Sapkota , 52 year old disabled man, Nepal

Addressing attitudinal barriers

- Integrate information on people who are vulnerable and marginalised IEC materials to dispel myths
- Use the media to raise awareness



Addressing institutional barriers

- Information in plain language helps people who are less literate, or people who are communicating in a second language.
- Raise staff's awareness on issues of exclusion
- Support governments to incorporate inclusive designs into standards
- Collaborating with specialist organisations and networks to raise awareness of the right to sanitation.



Carers looking at low-cost handrails (Zambia)

What we need to do more of

Environmental barriers

- Carry out access audits, in partnership with specialist groups, to identify physical and information barriers that may exclude people who are vulnerable.
- Promote a wider range of design options at household level.

Attitudinal barriers

- Implement communication campaigns to increase public knowledge and understanding of marginalisation
- Regularly include relevant data on people who are vulnerable in publications.
- Contribute to the evidence on how a lack of sanitation disproportionately impacts people who are vulnerable

What we need to do move of

Institutional barriers

- Support national governments to incorporate inclusive toilets into design standards and work with service providers to implement them.
- Develop partnerships or alliances with specialist advocacy groups, jointly identify key gaps in policy and legislation, and provide tools and funding for advocacy to address these gaps.
- Make information accessible so that everyone is more aware of their options.
- Generate more evidence on the benefits of effective sanitation for people who are vulnerable and marginalised
- Ensure that everyone is informed of their rights and mechanisms for complaints

Thank you



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