



WATER & SANITATION FOR ALL

Methodological Guides



n°5

How to manage public toilets and showers



The monitoring and control of toilet block management

Why is it important to monitor and control the quality and sustainability of the service?

It is important to regularly monitor and control the condition of the facilities, the service quality, use of the facilities by the users and the general hygiene and sanitation practices that have been adopted. Indeed, this enables stakeholders:

- to prevent deterioration, to guarantee the sustainability of the investment and to preserve the environment;
- to increase frequency of use and prevent the continuation of open air defecation;
- to ensure the privacy and dignity of users, especially women;
- to improve the health conditions of families;
- to improve pupils' school performance and to increase adults' professional activity;
- to reconcile the hygiene and sanitation messages given (particularly in schools and health centers) with users' daily practices.

The monitoring and control of community toilet blocks ensures that any weaknesses or deficiencies in the service can be anticipated and corrective measures put in place. This is not only the

responsibility of the body in charge of managing the blocks, but also of the public authorities.

Who implements the monitoring and control?

Monitoring is undertaken by the management body and the users

1. If the operation is undertaken by the public authorities (public control), then the technical service involved (that in charge of public hygiene and sanitation, for example) goes out into the field to check the work of the municipal employees charged with the daily upkeep of the toilet blocks.
2. If the operation is undertaken by a private operator or an association, then the entrepreneur or the executive board of the association conducts monitoring visits to check that the work of the staff responsible for upkeep, repairs and the till is being carried out correctly.

Monitoring corresponds to a method of 'self-checking' that has limitations: those checking the blocks are the same as those managing them. Their opinion, therefore, may not be entirely ob-

jective. The quality of the monitoring that is carried out mainly depends on the professional conscience of the management body and the means it has at its disposal. Furthermore, it is vital that users are involved in the monitoring process as this meets two essential requirements: on the one hand, it enables users to give their impression of the service, its quality and their expectations in terms of improvements; on the other hand, it permits the management body to raise the users' awareness as to the work involved in managing toilet blocks and its associated constraints.

In all situations, regardless of the management model and level of user involvement in the monitoring process, a second level of checks needs to be in place; one which is external and known as 'control'.

Control is external, conducted by a public institution and the users

1. **If the operation is undertaken by the public authorities**, by the municipality, for example, then the external control is to be carried out by another service responsible for ensuring that current standards are respected, for example the ministry in charge of health or public sanitation.
2. **If the blocks are built and managed by the private sector or an association**, then the municipal or decentralized state technical services in charge of sanitation, hygiene, health, urban planning or transport can conduct sanitation control and public hygiene education visits – even where the operator is not under a license system.
3. **If management of the blocks is delegated to a private operator or association**, the responsibility for controlling the respect of contractual obligations and performance falls to the public authority. Sometimes, it is the public authority

that has delegated management of the service and signed the delegation contract with the operator and, as a result, they are actively involved in the contract. It is for this reason that there is an independent authority in some countries that is responsible for regulating public service delegation contracts. This 'third party' takes on the role of arbitrator and policeman. It checks that each party is fulfilling its obligations and takes the necessary measures to rectify the situation if gaps are identified.

Regardless of the management model employed, it is highly recommended that users be involved in the control process. This means that the institution in charge of control needs to listen to users' opinions to ensure that recommendations made to improve the service are aligned to user expectations.

Prior to starting controls, encourage good maintenance of toilet blocks

To ensure that the toilet blocks are, and remain, in good working order and a state of cleanliness, and prior to any monitoring or control taking place, all parties involved need to be encouraged to wholly assume their responsibilities. Different incentive measures can be introduced by the management body, some of which are:

- the compensation or remuneration of the person(s) responsible for upkeep of the blocks (linked to sanctions in case these duties are neglected);
- the organization of regular visits by the head of the residents' community, traditional and religious authorities, neighborhood associations and women, etc. once or twice a year;
- the definition of criteria for ensuring good management; these are broken down into perform-

ance objectives which are then assigned to the management body and maintenance staff;

- the application of sanctions linked to the achievement of performance objectives. For example, the operator may decide to pay a bonus to the employee charged with maintenance in reward for good work. A delegating authority can terminate or renew an operator's contract depending on whether or not the objectives have been met. The state or commune hygiene services can impose a fine on a private entrepreneur who does not respect or publish the legal standards for cleanliness or, in contrast, they can award him a bonus;
- the organization of an annual festival on the subject of cleanliness in public places or of a competition to find the cleanest block in the neighborhood (or commune or region). The winner is rewarded with a prize. The prizes can be either material (T-shirts, cleaning products, mirrors, subsidy granted to cover the water bill, etc.) or financial or any other form of benefit. The prize should be enough to motivate participants without engendering the risk of corruption. A prize-giving ceremony can be organized either at the block or at the town hall, with journalists invited from all different types of media.

Monitoring by the management body and the users

The management body of the toilet blocks must check they are in good working order and monitor the level of hygiene and cleanliness. Some recommendations for the management body's internal monitoring procedures are presented below:

- carry out regular visits of the facilities (for example, once a month), which will also permit the management body to check that performance objectives are being met. To ensure that no checks are overlooked during the control visit, a checklist can be used that is to be completed during the visit;
- user representatives (external to the management body) can participate in the control visits: head of the residents' community, traditional and religious authorities, neighborhood associations and women, etc. Similarly, where an NGO initiated the construction of the toilet block, it may wish to check how well the block is withstanding over time. This participative approach enables discussion, consideration of all opinions (including those from people most concerned by the longevity of the blocks) and collective agreement on any actions to be taken. Checks can be made to ensure that these corrective actions have been implemented during the next visit;
- check the accounting and financial management.

To overcome the limitations and the risk of running out of steam (lack of sustained motivation, only loosely respecting monitoring procedures, etc.) that are posed by internal monitoring systems, a second level of control from outside the community is required; one that is institutionalized and conducted by the public authorities.

Checking the conditions of maintenance in the latrines: participative control in schools in RDC

In RDC, school health brigades (groups of elected pupils) conduct a participative diagnostic of the school's sanitary and environmental conditions, which leads to the production of a 'care and maintenance plan for sanitary facilities', written jointly by the pupils, teachers and parents. A school cleaning routine is set up that includes the toilet blocks and facilities are built or rehabilitated, based on the requirements identified, under the supervision of the pupils and parents' committees.

The brigades then conduct a final participative diagnostic on the cleanliness of the school, following which the school has to be certified as a 'Healthy School' by the education inspector of National Education. The school brigades then monitor the cleanliness indicators at school level (self-diagnostic). The standards to be met by schools in RDC to become 'Healthy Schools' are:

1. Staff trained in health and environment education
2. Teaching materials available and used
3. Availability of hygienic latrines, in good working order and used correctly
4. Water, soap or ash available and used for handwashing
5. School yard and classrooms are clean
6. School health and environment brigades are trained and operational

A school becomes, and remains, a 'Healthy School' as much for the quality of its monitoring processes as for its ability to meet the required standards.

Source: UNICEF and the Ministry for Primary, Secondary and Professional Education, Education Program for Health and the Environment, RDC, 2008

External control

The role of the public authorities is to ensure that good conditions of hygiene and cleanliness are present in all toilet blocks located in public places. They, therefore, need to check that the managers assume their responsibilities. Those public authorities directly concerned are:

- the commune and its technical service in charge of hygiene and sanitation, where there is one;
- central and decentralized services responsible for health;
- central and decentralized services responsible for hygiene and sanitation;

- central and decentralized services responsible for urban planning;
- potentially, the operator responsible for water supply and sanitation (operator or users' association).

These different services need to agree at national level to define who is to be made responsible for carrying out controls of toilet blocks in public places. This question is (or should be) dealt with in the National Sanitation Policy or National Urban Planning Policy, for example.

The aim of the control procedure is to identify any issues, establish the reasons for these with the management body and user representatives and to determine corrective measures.

Monitoring the maintenance of toilet blocks in deprived areas in India: the checklist recommended by the government

1 Are toilet blocks being operated and maintained well? Have water and electricity been made available?

2 Are users satisfied with the service?

- Are all the intended users availing themselves of the facility? If they are not, which section of the community is not using the facility and why?
- Do health and sanitation education programs need to be stepped up to motivate those who are not using the facility?
- If the 'per person per use' payment system is a deterrent, are the users willing to pay on a monthly basis for the facility?
- Any suggestions for use of the facility from the targeted users?

3 If the toilet block is not functioning for any reason, like chokage of the sewer, non-availability of water supply, etc., have the deficiencies been dealt with expeditiously?

- Is a round-the-clock attendant service (where applicable) ensured?
- Is the staff in place adequate?

4 Is there a complaint book available in the toilet block? Are there any complaints about the operation and maintenance of the toilet block and have these been attended to quickly?

5 Are there any problems or constraints? Are there any suggestions for resolving them or for improving the functioning of the community toilet block?

Source: Government of India and UNDP, Directives on community latrines, 1995

Some recommendations for public authority control procedures are given below:

- control procedures involve making regular, planned visits to the toilet blocks (for example, every six months or once a year); these can be supplemented by surprise visits;
- ideally, the service in charge of carrying out the controls also has a checklist of points to verify and an evaluation grid. These tools are to be provided by the central services and should be the same for each of the four categories of public places (schools, health centers, commercial centers and deprived areas);
- the visit can be conducted in the presence of the management body of the blocks, community representatives and the users listed above, even the mayor of the commune. It is highly recommended that an update is given to users following each visit;
- accounting and financial management should be checked systematically;
- a report should be produced following each visit that includes the completed control grid and which is signed by the controller and the operator;
- at the end of the visit, the corrective actions are discussed and determined with the management body; these actions are thereby transformed into obligations.

The service responsible for carrying out the control will check whether the corrective actions have all been carried out (and the management body will do the same). Sanctions can be applied if these corrective measures have not been implemented.

Monitoring toilet blocks in schools: checklist recommended by UNICEF

Detail location: village, school name, how many classes **Number of pupils:** total, girls, boys

Hygiene

1. What and how many handwashing facilities are available? Taps connected to the network / drinking water stands with tap / other
2. Condition of these facilities? Functioning / not functioning / leaking
3. Where is it located? Inside school / outside school / next to toilet
4. Are sanitation facilities more than 50 meters away from the school? yes no
5. Is water available? yes no
6. Is soap/ash/mud available? yes no
7. What water source is used for the handwashing stand? Pipe / water brought to a barrel / other
8. If a pipe, is there water available? yes no
9. What is the condition of the school yard? Clean / dirty
10. Are there visible faeces? yes no
11. Do pupils (boys and girls) use the safe water and sanitation facilities? yes no
12. Do pupils (boys and girls) wash hands after using the latrine and before eating in school? yes no

Water container

13. What is the inside condition of the water containers? Clean / dirty
14. Are drinking water containers properly covered? yes no
15. How do children drink? With their own cups / with one single cup / with their hands / with their mouths

Sanitation

15. Smell. Tolerable / disgusting
16. Are there cleaning materials available? yes no
17. What is the distance from the toilet to the water source? More than 20 m / less than 20 m
18. What is the distance between the school and the toilets? Between 30 and 50 m / more than 50 m / less than 30 m
19. What obvious improvements are needed? Cleaning / emptying / ventilation / other
20. Any other problem?

Source: UNICEF, 'Strengthening Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Schools', 2010

Carrying out monitoring and control based on objective criteria

The monitoring and control procedures can be supported by a grid listing all the criteria required to ensure good management; these criteria are broken down into performance objectives and indicators.

This grid is to be completed by the technical service charged with carrying out the control during its visit and can also be used by the management body of the block, potentially assisted by user and community representatives. This type of support enables progress made at individual block level to be monitored, as well as that observed in the commune as a whole, a region or a country.

Some recommendations regarding this type of monitoring and evaluation are provided below:

- the grid used by the service carrying out the control should be identical for all the country's community toilet blocks so that performance can be compared;
- the indicators should remain relatively stable so that progress can be monitored over time;
- the management criteria and objectives set should be aligned to national advice on the subject. The initial questions that must be answered when developing a grid are as follows:
 - is there a policy, strategy, any practical advice at national level relating to the management of toilet blocks in public places?
 - if yes, does this contain rules and criteria for good management?
 - have objectives and performance indicators already been defined?

- are they still relevant and adapted to the local context?
- can they be improved or refined?
- the criteria should be as exhaustive as possible but without so many indicators being put in place that they complicate the data collection process;
- the criteria can relate to:
 - the level of facilities and the working condition of the toilet blocks;
 - utilization of the toilet blocks by all categories of user;
 - the level of cleanliness of the blocks and surrounding areas;
 - the institutional organization of the management;
 - accounting and financial management;
 - hygiene and sanitation education and awareness-raising;
- the indicators should be quantitative and qualitative;
- the indicators should be objectively verifiable and easily measured;
- where management of the blocks are delegated to a private operator or association, then the criteria, objectives and control indicators should be included in the contract. If a license system is used, then the criteria for obtaining the license should be documented, published and verified in a transparent manner;
- the grid can contain activity indicators (for example: how many times a day are the blocks cleaned?) and results indicators (for example: does open air defecation persist?).

Without meaning to be prescriptive and as a general guide, the table below provides an example monitoring and control grid. These objectives and indicators are not necessarily meant to be included as contractual obligations when delegating management to an operator.

An example monitoring and control table

CRITERIA FOR GOOD MANAGEMENT	PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS
LEVEL OF FACILITIES AND WORKING CONDITION	The toilet blocks are in good condition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proportion of latrines covered with secure slabs - Proportion of pits not overflowing - Cleaning materials available
	The handwashing facilities are in good condition	Average number of users per day in relation to the number of handwashing facilities with soap and a sufficient quantity of water
UTILIZATION	The toilet blocks are utilized by all users	Visible evidence of continuing open air defecation in the area?
	Handwashing is encouraged	The distance from the block to handwashing facilities is less than 20m
	Use of toilet blocks conforms to practices of hygiene and cleanliness	Proportion of users systematically washing hands with soap after using the latrine and before eating
GENERAL LEVEL OF CLEANLINESS	Cleanliness of the latrines is satisfactory	Number of times per day the latrines are cleaned with detergent or soap
		No flies or smells
	The water stand and surrounding area are well maintained	Stagnant water lying around the water stand

Monitoring and control

INSTITUTIONAL ORGANIZATION	Clearly identified and active management body is in place	Existence of a validated document establishing the management body as being responsible for the toilet block and defining the remit of each stakeholder and current procedures
		Number of meetings held by the management body in the last 6 months
ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	There is transparent management of funds	A treasurer has been appointed and trained
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Account books are in place and up-to-date - Receipts and bills are available
	Expenditure for repairs and emptying has been forecast	Amount available in the funds for financing repairs and pit emptying
		Amount of reserve left in the funds to cover unforeseen costs
HYGIENE AND SANITATION EDUCATION	Users are well informed on the risks of lack of hygiene and cleanliness and on good practices	Presence of notices in the blocks in sufficient number that are visible and illustrated with pictures or photos to inform users
		The cashier or cleaner systematically makes users aware of good practices

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How to manage public toilets and showers

The aim of the CMS Methodological guides series is to provide aids and tools that correspond to water and sanitation service-related issues to best meet the needs of sector stakeholders. These guides are designed to evolve over time and be regularly updated. To assist with this process, please send any feedback or suggestions for improving this publication to the following address: **le-jalle@pseau.org**



How to manage public toilets and showers

Methodological Guide n° 5

In many developing countries, particularly in Africa, access to water supply and sanitation comes under the remit of local authorities. To assist the local contracting authorities in developing this service, programme Solidarité Eau (pS-Eau) and the Municipal Development Partnership (MDP) have initiated and coordinated the Concerted Municipal Strategies program (CMS – water and sanitation for all). This program has enabled pilot municipal strategies for water and sanitation to be developed in twelve large towns in West, Central and East Africa and has led to greater consideration being given to the concept of pooling resources on a regional scale so as to improve services in small towns in three countries of West Africa. The five CMS guides are intended for local authorities, local water and sanitation service stakeholders and their development partners (NGOs, consultancy firms, etc.). Methodological tools are provided to assist these local authorities and stakeholders at each stage of the process when developing and implementing a water and sanitation services development strategy.

This publication sets out the different management models available for shared toilets and showers in schools, public and commercial places, health centers and deprived neighborhoods.

The guide reviews the principles that need to be respected and the possible options available to ensure proper and sustainable management of public toilet blocks. Whilst it does not claim to deal with or respond to all questions, this guide does provide those elements essential for ensuring local decision-makers are able to take appropriate decisions in order to provide access to hygiene and sanitation services in public places.

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