Working with Community Committees

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1. Introduction

Strong community participation, often channelled through beneficiary groups or committees, is the backbone of Oxfam's approach to Public Health programming. It facilitates community-led project design, implementation and monitoring, and encourages participation and accountability. Working with committees also allows us to work effectively with large populations and to continue activities when it is not safe or practical for staff to be present in the field.

The aim of this Briefing Paper is to ensure awareness amongst management and programme staff of the issues surrounding community committees, and to encourage consistency in the planning, budgeting, implementation and monitoring of activities with committees and volunteers.

An evaluation of water and sanitation committees in India highlighted transparency, participation, inclusion and ownership as key committee features associated with project success. Of these, transparency emerged as the single most important feature of the committees. It was found that the more community members who understood the project in terms of finances, committee functioning and selection of committee members, the more chance of success. (WSP, 2001)

2. Key Considerations

Consistency

An ad hoc or un-coordinated approach to working with committees can lead to damaging inconsistencies between different project sites, or across programme sectors. For example inconsistencies can emerge if some activities are carried out by paid (casual) labourers and others are undertaken by volunteers. Levels and types of "incentives" (cash, food, clothes or other goods sometimes given to committee members to encourage participation) can also vary considerably between projects.

The impact of these inconsistencies is magnified when varying community engagement policies between different NGOs and UN agencies are considered. Inter-agency discrepancies seriously damage the relationship between communities, local authorities and NGOs, and can potentially create security risks for field staff.

The Kenya programme has recognised that although NGOs have been involved in community training and committee development in the country for decades, there was little or no documentation of the processes followed by different agencies, nor the actual content of training. This made it impossible to know the quality of what had been done, and led to inconsistencies and overlap between NGOs.

To tackle this, the public health team undertook an exercise of consultation with other NGOs and government structures to determine strategies and materials for capacity building of community committees. The output is a common NGO approach for working with

committees and a training framework / toolkit for use across the sector.

female-headed households or the presence of chronically-ill people in the home.

Contract for Casua

Livelihood

It is well understood that income-generating opportunities for beneficiaries are limited. When committee volunteers dedicate time to public health activities this can impact their ability to earn.

It is often assumed (or recommended) by staff that Oxfam activities are for the community's benefit; therefore volunteers should be compensated for their efforts by others in their community. However this ideal solution needs to be balanced against the lack of livelihood opportunities; delicate community dynamics (ethnically, politically etc.) and the urgent need to deliver public health activities to certain groups (e.g. new arrivals).

The importance of participation needs to be emphasised to communities, and from the start of a programme it should be clearly understood that there will always be activities that beneficiaries must take on themselves: this is much easier if there has been meaningful community input into the programme design.

A simplistic solution to the livelihood issue which is sometimes proposed is to include committee volunteers as livelihood project beneficiaries. This risks missing the most vulnerable in the community and blurs the focus of the volunteers input to public health activities. It should only be considered if very clear beneficiary / volunteer criteria are set and agreed with the community.

In Beni (DRC) a process of involving livelihood beneficiaries as public health volunteers was developed which allowed for positive involvement of host communities alongside IDPs. To ensure effectiveness the team set objective and transparent vulnerability criteria for volunteer selection, such as people from

Legal Issues

National legislation covering employee rights and employer responsibilities can give considerable rights to volunteers and committees. In some countries "volunteers" are treated as employees in legal terms if they are given any regular remuneration for their work, even if this is just weekly tea and sugar.

Given the numbers of volunteers working with Oxfam, and the crucial need for these volunteer's inputs, legal liabilities need to be treated with the highest priority.

Since 2003 the Darfur programme has relied on the work of over 2,000 community volunteers to deliver essential public health activities. This committee engagement has generally been a positive process, well received by communities, and has delivered impressive results.

However the Sudanese Labour Act gives considerable rights to employees and this has implications for community volunteers. In particular volunteers are treated as employees if they are given regular remuneration for their work.

Since 2006 this has led to a plethora of court cases being brought by individuals or groups who have worked with or volunteered for NGOs in Darfur against their 'employer'. There have even been cases where the provision of *fatur* (communal breakfast) has been interpreted by the courts as employee remuneration.

To address this potential risk, the HR team in Sudan worked closely with programme staff to develop procedures for remuneration and committee working, including a standard Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that describes levels of volunteer involvement. Furthermore some staff who were being treated as volunteers, but were effectively doing a full time job (e.g. water pump attendants),

were transferred onto Oxfam contracts through the standard recruitment process.

Gender and Vulnerable Groups

Women are the principal beneficiaries, managers and users of water. They may be aware of problems earlier or have a different perspective on how best to achieve things. It cannot be assumed that the interests of the whole family will be optimised if the committee only consists of men. Yet when committee roles and responsibilities are devised, it is common for communities to allocate unpaid duties to women, whilst the men are given paid casual work.

A familiar solution to this problem is for our proposals or logframes to target 50% of committee members to be women. Whilst equal representation is important, it is vital to look beyond this basic qualitative indicator. Otherwise we might miss, for example, that 8 women on the committee are doing 3 days of unpaid solid waste clean-ups a week, whilst 8 men are digging pipelines for $10 a day.

Differences in committee participation by gender extend further than activity segregation; it is important to monitor the degree of influence females have in committee decisions. This is something which needs consideration and discussion with different groups (women, youth, men etc.) when the committee is established and after a review period.

Experience from around the world indicates that where women are actively involved in decision making the quality of a project is enhanced: In Somalia - a strongly male-dominated society - one criteria for Oxfam-supported health committees is that women occupy at least 30% of the decision-making positions. The 2002 Water Act in Kenya also requires 30% of decision-making posts in Water User Associations (WUAs) to be women.

In some cases it is beneficial to establish separate women's committees, to ensure that the female voice is heard, however this can lead to further marginalisation if all key decisions are taken in the separate "men's" or "leaders" committee. Strong monitoring and feedback mechanisms are crucial for identifying this.

Vulnerable groups in the community, for example older people and the disabled can also be active members of a committee even if they are not able to do physical work such as operation and maintenance. For example they can play an important role in other areas such as finance or registration. If any committee member does not have a meaningful job they risk becoming a token presence.

Sustainability

A common argument against giving incentives to committee volunteers is that they merely encourage involvement when they are being handed-out. Participation fades when incentives are stopped (whether because of changes in implementation strategies, or after the NGO exits) because the volunteers do not understand the real importance of their involvement, and have not developed their own mechanisms to ensure sustainability. The argument suggests that effort should be focussed on educating beneficiaries on the long-term importance of the activity, and on developing community-based management committees – for example water point operation and maintenance committees who collect fees and do not rely on Oxfam incentives.

This is a valid consideration for many of our programmes, and for a proportion of our activities (e.g. household-level hygiene activities). However, in some acute emergencies we are not aiming for 'sustainability'; the emergency situation itself is unsustainable. Oxfam's immediate priority is to ensure that essential public health activities take place, not whether we can 'hand-over'

activities to communities in the short- or long-term. This is closely linked to the above livelihoods issue; and must be judged on a case-by-case basis, balancing the opportunities for developing sustainable activities which provide communities with long-term benefits, with the reality of the dynamic, acute emergencies.

Motivation

As is to be expected, the individuals and committee groups we work with have different motivations for dedicating their time and effort to community activities.

Possible motivations for involvement can include altruism; community spirit; the opportunity to improve social standing within the community; the desire to learn; the importance of clan or tribal representation; and the expectation to receive financial or gift incentives.

Whilst our understanding of the range of personal motivating factors is often limited, it is well worth the effort to discuss this amongst the team and informally with volunteers: understanding their motivations will help in the design of a more sustainable, appropriate and transparent committee structure.

Budget Issues

Concerns over budget availability can limit opportunities for sustained committee involvement in chronic emergencies.

It is clear that not every Oxfam volunteer can receive compensation every day. However, paying employees for priority activities (for example pump operators) or at specific times (e.g. a cholera outbreak) is an option that can encourage rapid programme implementation.

The budget implications of this need not be excessive, however it is important to consider the need for this contingency at the time of preliminary / annual budgeting

to ensure that there is no delay when casual labour is required.

3. Common Principles

Every Oxfam programme is different; so we should not necessarily apply identical structures or ways of working to committees and volunteers in different countries or contexts. However there are certain principles which should be applied to community committees (or at minimum, considered) regardless of the situation.

Co-ordination

Planning and implementation of work with committees should be clearly co-ordinated across the Oxfam programme (e.g. with livelihoods), and with other NGOs, to avoid over-burdening certain individuals and to ensure consistency. This should include common agreement on committee selection, composition and incentives. Added value can also be gained from sharing training and resources (e.g. community meeting places) between groups, and from learning lessons on legal issues and traditional community volunteering practices from other NGOs.

To address problems of inconsistent approaches to health workers and WASH committees during the 2008-09 Zimbabwe Cholera Epidemic the WASH Cluster formed a Technical Working Group on 'Working with WASH Facilitators' and was able to quickly draft and agree a set of guidelines for the Cluster. Whilst these recommendations had no legal standing, they encouraged NGOs to work with volunteers in a co-ordinated manner, and had the support of the major WASH donors.

Link to Existing Structures

It is important to understand local practice of volunteering and community organisation before establishing Oxfam committees. We should respect and where possible work with established local structures, suggesting minor adaptations

(e.g. to promote gender equality, ethnic diversity) rather than creating new (rival) groups altogether.

In some situations it might be possible to work with the appropriate government structures as well as traditional community groups. This can provide more opportunities for the sustainability, but needs to be carefully managed in conflict or politically-sensitive locations.

As part of the response to Hurricane Dean in 2007, the Haiti programme worked successfully with local government (Mayor's Office, *Sections Communales*, and the Public Health, Water and Education Departments) this helped integration of the Oxfam programmes because the authorities were equally interested in livelihoods and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) as in public health.

Selection of Committees

A clear and transparent mechanism for selecting committee members needs to be agreed with the entire community (i.e. not just leadership) at the earliest opportunity. It is tempting to merely accept a list of names from "the community", but if a group has been openly selected it is more likely to remain accountable to the wider beneficiary community.

Oxfam's Toolkit for WUAs in Kenya lists the following underlined important attributes for committee members:

- ✓ Use the water source themselves.

- ✓ Have sufficient time to spend involved in project matters.

- ✓ Trusted by community.

- ✓ Will remain in village for future years.

- ✓ Representative of different neighbourhoods / water users.

- ✓ Hard-working.

- ✓ Active.

- ✓ Dependable.

The active involvement of women and other vulnerable groups, and fair representation of different ethnic groups, should to be promoted and agreed early on in the project.

Committee size: A recent survey of WUAs in Turkana, Kenya reported that the average size of committee was 15 members. However several had 20 or more members and one even had 40. It concluded that there is nothing wrong with a large number of committee members as long as everyone knows his/her role and is motivated to be involved. If roles are unclear and people do not see the purpose or value they are adding then something needs to change.

It is good practice to maintain a database of community members involved directly in Oxfam work – both volunteers in committees and casual labourers – recording details of representation across villages or camps, the length of time volunteers have been working with Oxfam and any trainings they have received etc. This can documenting and sharing capacity building lessons, and could be used as a resource to minimise employment law issues.

A sample Volunteer Database can be obtained from the Public Health Team in Oxford.

Committee Focus

Often a community committee which has been established or supported by Oxfam will be focused on one main public health issue – whether water, sanitation or hygiene promotion. If this is the case it is important that this focus is considered when committees are established, to ensure that members have the aptitude for the particular issue. If specific technologies are to be adopted in the project (e.g. solar pumping, or school hygiene) this will have an impact on how the committee needs to function.

Clarity in Roles and Responsibilities

The community should be involved in devising and agreeing the roles and responsibilities of committee members and Oxfam in delivering the project. Roles and responsibilities should be recorded and on-going monitoring can assess performance with the agreement. Developing a constitution for the committee at an early stage can improve transparency and confidence amongst the wider community, and should include the following aspects (source WUA Toolkit):

1. Clearly defined role of WUA as an institution (defined by an objective) and individual members that comprise it (who qualifies for membership).

2. Clearly defined office bearers and the roles (job descriptions).

3. Frequency of meeting and decision-making (number of people required to pass decisions) and method of decision-making (majority voting or unanimous).

4. Clearly defined term of office (frequency of elections).

5. Clearly defined election procedure where members can decide without duress.

6. Methods of accountability – financial procedures, auditing, book keeping, sharing information with water users.

Misunderstandings and discrepancies with roles and responsibilities can usually be tackled before they become major problems if there are clear communication channels and regular project meetings with committees and project volunteers.

One approach to ensuring consistency and an agreed understanding of roles and responsibilities is through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) or Letter of Agreement (LoA) between Oxfam and the community. This can state the names of those involved, dates of the project, commitments of Oxfam and the committee and details of any materials, incentive or remuneration the committee will receive.

A sample MoU can be obtained from the Public Health Team in Oxford.

Note that an MoU is a legal document in some countries, so the wording should be agreed with an Oxfam-approved lawyer before it is signed with the community. Copies should be translated into the local language and read to any illiterate committee members for agreement.

Incentives

It is good practice for each Oxfam project within a defined area (country, state) to use a consistent annual budget for 'incentives' per community committee member – all the better if this level is agreed with other NGOs. Agreeing a budget per volunteer allows for large and small committees to be treated equally. This ensures a consistent approach and encourages the tricky incentives issue to be discussed and agreed at the time of project planning and budgeting.

The budget line can then be allocated to different actual incentives (t-shirts, food, party days etc.) according to project plans and community priorities.

Representing the community or representing Oxfam? A recent review in South Sudan revealed that volunteers who had been given t-shirts with Oxfam logos as an incentive (four years previously) still thought that they were Oxfam "staff"! This highlights the importance of careful selection and design of incentive materials: logos and graphics should be focussed primarily on community and project aims; Oxfam and donor publicity is of secondary importance.

Following inter-NGO discussion on incentives the Zimbabwe WASH Cluster agreed that the primary focus of incentives

should be on "encouraging volunteerism and community responsibility for community health". The Cluster recommended the following as options for incentives for 'WASH volunteers' (defined as community members working on WASH activities for a few hours per week (approximately 1 to 4 hours per week):

- Provide t-shirts, hats, raincoats, umbrellas or other "promotional" equipment

- Provide bicycles or other method of transport (e.g. collection by NGO) to carry out specific tasks (e.g. trainings).

- Provide lunch / refreshments at specific events.

- Provide NFIs (e.g. soap, buckets) to showcase good hygiene practice.

- Consider paying school fees or providing school kits for their children.

- Provide literacy classes (or other community defined need).

- Provide an allowance when on training away from their home areas for more than a day.

Adult Education as an incentive for pastoral community volunteers, Wajir Drought Preparedness Project, Kenya

Pastoral communities in Wajir have very low levels of literacy, the number of adult education teachers has dwindled in recent years, and most adult education now happens in towns and small centres so is not accessible for pastoral communities. During an Oxfam assessment of pastoral needs, community members cited lack of adult education as a priority need and the opportunity was seized to use the group as agents of change for hygiene promotion.

In this approach adult education groups were formed in 20 villages for the purpose of learning and action – both for livelihoods and hygiene promotion. It is a

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means of rewarding those who take responsibilities to improve health in their communities. The adults are taught to read and write for economic and religious purposes but also learn about health issues. Through adult education gatherings, adults learn how diseases are spread and means of prevention, and draw action plans as part of their homework assignments. These groups and settings help previously-illiterate groups overcome their sense of powerlessness by learning about problems and issues, and acquiring knowledge on how they can tackle them.

Committee Capacity Building

A thorough programme of training for committees and volunteers is essential if they are to have the necessary capacity to support Oxfam public health activities. Training needs should be developed in collaboration with the community to ensure materials are appropriate and to encourage participation.

The format of training sessions must also be carefully planned with the community. For example 'centralised workshops' (bringing together communities from different sites to one location) can discourage the participation of women, who find it more difficult to leave their home or village. Centralised workshops can instead attract people who are more interested in travel allowances than in actual learning!

To tackle this problem the Kenya programme follows a stepped approach to committee training, spending 1 or 2 hours in each village and tackling one topic at a time. Staff then return the following week or month to see what has been acted upon and why, and decide with the community whether to proceed to the next step or have a refresher on the previous session.

Any committee capacity building plan should consider both technical skills and committee management capabilities.

Committee capacity building is an on-going process and should not simply rely on formal training sessions. Mentoring of committee members is important, and project visits to other committees can encourage sharing of lessons learnt.

In some situations it may be useful (or required) to support committees to register as official bodies, for example, under national water legislation. This can also help sustainability and transparency.

Accountability

It is important to ensure that we do not regard committees as cheap labour to undertake Oxfam activities, as a quick way of achieving <u>our</u> project aims. The relationship needs to be 2-way with Oxfam equally accountable to the committee – listening to their needs as well as proposing our solutions.

Mistrust, delay and low participation can be avoided by putting in place mechanisms for improved interaction and feedback on how each party is performing.

We can go a long way to improving accountability by ensuring a timely response to community concerns and delivery of commitments to beneficiaries within an agreed timescale. Too often poor performance on simple matters – such as turning up to community meetings on time, or delivering latrine slabs immediately after the hole is dug – can badly sour community relations.

Accountability can also be promoted by making any handover of materials or cash to a committee in a public forum – perhaps during a project launch event – to ensure the whole community have a common understanding of the programme and are aware of specific resource donations.

> Accountability between the committee and the wider community is also important. Oxfam's Toolkit for WUAs in Kenya suggests:

- To have a mandate to represent the village the committee should be democratically elected by village members (men and women).

- The committee should have clear statute to define their responsibility, what decisions it can make independently and what decisions need referral to the village.

- The committee should only act where it has a clear mandate to do so.

- Committee should have a fixed term of office after which time they must step down or seek re-election.

- All financial records and transactions should be open to scrutiny by other village members.

- The committee must not forget that it serves the wider community and is obliged to always keep the village aware of project developments and ensure a good flow of information.

Avoid Over-Burdening

Projects frequently see the same group of beneficiaries (usually the most educated or influential) participating in most of Oxfam's work, both paid and un-paid. This inevitably places a large burden on a small number of people, and risks focussing resources and services to a limited dominant group.

It is recommended to distribute the volunteer workload more widely amongst the community to lessen this overall burden. This also promotes transparency as the beneficiaries are able to clearly see the specific work and benefits of different volunteer committees, and reduces the loss to the project when highly-trained individuals from the community leave the area.

One solution for avoiding over-burdening is to promote the rotation of members after a certain period, under a strong committee structure. However this needs careful

planning to ensure the original committee are not disenfranchised, and that time is not wasted continually selecting and training new committee members. A possible solution is to have a set number of the members stepping down after a specific period.

In Kalma IDP camp, South Darfur, the Public Health team noticed a drop off in committee participation after 3 years of intervention. After discussing the issues with the community it became clear that the WATSAN committee volunteers were being over-burdened with the delivery of all public health activities. It was agreed to split the WATSAN volunteers into three groups each covering a specific topic (water, latrines, solid waste). This reduced the overall burden on individuals, who were also happier because they could see clear impacts of their work. The wider community also liked the system, as they knew exactly which volunteers in their local area were involved with different services, so they knew whom to approach if they had a problem.

Involve HR

Due to the security, legal and programme implications of working with large numbers of volunteers and casuals, programme staff should discuss the formation of any new committees or volunteer groups with HR staff. Request HR for specific help in:

- Understanding of relevant labour laws.

- Developing documented systems for engaging volunteers and committees.

- Checking current casual labour and volunteer groups and identifying programme and legal risks.

HR should treat issues with committees and volunteers with the same rigour, accountability and consistency as is accorded to internal Oxfam staff salaries and conditions.

Community-based Monitoring

Community committees can play an important role in participatory monitoring and evaluation of programme activities, alongside direct Oxfam monitoring processes.

In Kenya committees are able to gauge their own level of development by using a 'Committee Scorecard' (see over). This was developed as a mechanism for measuring change – something that was very difficult for Oxfam to do directly without community input.

Committees can also support the monitoring of our health activities: in South Sudan, committees are involved in the identification of "model households" (which have clean compounds, proper use of dish rack, rubbish pit, bathing shelter and pit latrine with hand washing facility). The model households are awarded a flag to display, and the system has delivered impressive results over the past two years.

It is important to remember that we should not over-use committees and volunteers when we do M&E. A wide spectrum of the community need to be consulted about the progress of our work if we are to understand all the issues. For example if we only hold focus groups with the volunteers we know (maybe because they are easiest to organise!) these groups will give a biased opinion of activities and the participants will have an unrepresentative awareness of hygiene practices.

Contingency Planning

Community committees can play the lead role in ensuring public health programmes are continued during periods of insecurity or remote management. This needs clear forward planning to establish communication and other logistical channels and well as specific implementation plans (➔ Oxfam Briefing Paper on Remote Management / Limited Access).

Forward Plan Exit Strategy

The length of time for which we will be actively engaged with a community committee needs careful planning at the start of any intervention, and must be discussed and agreed with the community at this stage.

This is relevant in all situations – whether short-term humanitarian responses, development work, or long-term chronic emergencies where we might work with committees over many years.

Often the most viable option for Oxfam to exit from directly supporting a community committee is for linking the organisation into wider local governance structures.

It is always difficult to avoid the problems of dependency upon Oxfam support and ensure 100% committee sustainability, however a clear and consistent exit or hand-over strategy can help address these issues.

Committee Scorecard

This is an example matrix or scorecard developed in Kenya for Water Management Committees that covers many of the common principles of working with committees and volunteers. It should be adapted according to the process and function of the committee.

Water Management Committee Scorecard			Village:		Date:	
	Criteria	Scoring scale 0	Scoring scale 1	Scoring scale 2	Scoring scale 3	Score
1	Community is registered under the 2002 Water Act to manage water facilities	No legal form of registration	WUA registered with Ministry of Culture & Social Services	Registered with MoC&SS and in process of becoming a Water Service Provider	Legally recognised WSP with Water Service Board	
2	Committee meets on a regular basis to discuss issues pertaining to the management of their facilities	No scheduled meetings, may occasionally meet when forced to respond to a problem	Meets on semi regular basis although more likely to be reactively in response to a problem. Issues not well documented or shared with community	Meet regularly, some documentation kept and sharing with wider community but needs improving	Meets on a regular monthly basis, clear agenda and minuted meetings which can be viewed by members	
3	Committee has a clear framework which defines its role and informs decision making	No document exists	Constitution or bylaws exist but not practically used	Constitution or bylaws exist and are used but require some review/strengthening	Clear and practical constitution that actively defines role of WUA/ ways of working	
4	Committee members are clear on their role and motivated to fulfil task	Members not clear on roles, poorly motivated and not active	Some confusion in roles, partial participation from members with decisions dominated by a few individuals	Members can explain their roles with more clarity, involvement from most members exhibited by attendance & participation at meeting but could be improved	Written descriptions describe the role of each person and/ or discussions with WUA members confirm they know their role and are motivated for the job	
5	WUA is accountable for income and expenditure	No bank account and no records of income and expenditures are kept. No mechanisms to check for fraud	Bank account exists but not active. Some records kept but incomplete or discrepancies observed	Active bank account with periodic transactions. Records kept and generally in order but analysis is difficult and/or information not available to public	Community maintains bank account with approved signatories and detailed record of all transactions. Bank deposits / withdrawals can be reconciled with cash book, recording all income & payments, which is publicly available for scrutiny. Accounts can be inspected/queried by users or have been audited	
6	Equitable tariff structure is in place, payment made against cash sale receipts, entries made in cash book and monitored against	No tariff structure in place and water is generally not paid for	Water tariff exists but collection is ad hoc (less than 30% of users regularly contribute). Needs of poor not fully considered or larger	Water user charges collected but not accounted for properly. No cash sale receipts issued and no cash book maintained	Water charges collected against receipts and entered into cash books. 75% or more pay for water with agreed concessions for most	

	demand		users/livestock owners not accountable		vulnerable households	
7	WUA is fairly elected and truly representative of the interests of the community	WUA not fairly elected or accountable to users	Flaws in election system (e.g. queuing or show of hands) may compromise fairness. Term of office not clearly defined/re-elections held	Ballot and WUA members generally considered representative but some flaws in election/re-election process	Secret ballot or system that users consider to be open and fair by members. Fixed term with re-elections held accordingly	
8	Equitable representation	No women represented on WUA	Women present within committee but not actively involved in decision making	At least 30% of WUA are women with one or more as an office bearer. Women are actively involved in attending meetings and influence decisions	Equitable gender balance both in representation on WUA and decision making positions	
9	The committee is aware of its responsibility to become self reliant and is able to articulate its relationship with government at district level	Village relies heavily on external support to run its facilities and is doing nothing to address dependency. Poor links with district level stakeholders	Committee aware of its responsibility towards self reliance	Community is aware of its responsibilities and is moving in the right direction but requires skills to manage its facilities and source external support where required	Community is self reliant, has developed strong links with Water sector institutions and is able to communicate and influence district level decision making through regular channels of communication	
10	Water users express satisfaction with the performance of their committee	General discontent with, or distrust of, committee. Majority are not satisfied with their performance & don't believe committee represents their interests	A minority of users express some concern about performance of committee (e.g. sighting accountability or dishonest practices)	Majority of users are generally satisfied with committee however they feel there is room for improvement	8 out of 10 users in a random sample express confidence in the accountability and belief that WUA is serving their interest	
Comments:						
Action Plan: What issues need to be addressed in the next 12 months:						

4. Further Information

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5. Contributors

The following Oxfam staff provided valuable insight and examples from their field experience for this briefing paper: