

BANGLADESH

**INTEGRATED WATER AND SANITATION PROGRAMME
THROUGH PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS**

**NGO FORUM FOR DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION
SUPPORTED BY SDC AND DANIDA**

**Appraisal Report from a joint SDC/Danida Mission
visiting Bangladesh from 23/9 to 20/10 1996**

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Danida
Asiatisk Plads 2
DK 1448 Copenhagen K
Denmark

Swiss Agency for
Development and
Cooperation
Berne
Switzerland

Ref. No. 104.Bang.172

Ref. No. T.311/BD/48

February, 1997

This Report contains restricted information and is for internal use only

R022 - 14243

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 General	1
1.2 Status of the Report	2
2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
2.1 Background	3
2.2 Analysis and Assessment	3
2.3 Recommendations	7
3. BACKGROUND	11
3.1 Socio-Economic Situation	11
3.2 Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Sector	12
3.2.1 Sector Organizations and Donors	12
3.2.2 Water Supply	13
3.2.3 Sanitation	14
3.2.4 Training	16
3.2.5 Hygiene Promotion	17
3.3 NGO Sector in General	17
3.4 NGO Forum	18
3.5 Description of NGO Forum Proposal	19
4. GENERAL ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT	22
4.1 The Need for the Project	22
4.2 Comparative Advantages and Disadvantages of NGO Forum and its Partners NGOs	22
4.3 General Assessment of the NGO Forum Proposal	24
4.4 Poverty Orientation	25
4.5 Gender Issues	26

	<u>Page</u>
5.	SECTOR SPECIFIC ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT 28
5.1	Water Supply, Site Selection 28
5.2	Water Supply, Subsidy Issues 29
5.3	Water Supply, Shallow Water Table Area 29
5.4	Water Supply, Low Water Table Area 30
5.5	Water Supply, Coastal Belt 31
5.6	Water Supply, Other Technologies 32
5.7	Sanitation 35
5.7.1	Role of Private Producers and DPHE 35
5.7.2	Village Sanitation Centres 36
5.7.3	Technological Issues 38
5.8	Training 38
5.8.1	General Training Needs 38
5.8.2	Role and Capacity of NGO Forum 38
5.8.3	Use of External Consultants 39
5.8.4	Assessment of the Proposed Training Courses 40
5.8.5	Decentralization of Training 41
5.8.6	Caretaker Training 42
5.8.7	Training Materials 42
5.9	Communication Materials 42
5.9.1	Comparative Advantages of NGO Forum 42
5.9.2	Capacity of NGO Forum 42
5.9.3	Relevance/Appropriateness of Communication Materials 43
5.9.4	Gender Perspectives 44
5.9.5	Communication Materials and Promotional Activities 44
5.9.6	Coordination with other Stakeholders and Private Agencies 44
5.10	Promotional Activities and Information Dissemination 45
5.10.1	Strategy and Approach 45
5.10.2	Extent of Activities and Need for Prioritization 46
5.10.3	Partner NGO's Capacity 46
5.10.4	Gender Perspectives 46
5.10.5	Impact on Beneficiaries 47
5.11	Advocacy and Information Services 48

	<u>Page</u>
6.	ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT 49
6.1	Partner NGOs 49
6.2	Organizational Policy 49
6.3	Institutional Framework 50
6.3.1	Organizational Development 50
6.3.2	Membership and Governance Structure 51
6.3.3	Organizational set-up 52
6.3.4	Decentralization to and Strengthening of Regional Offices 53
6.4	Staffing Issues 53
6.4.1	Size and Distribution 53
6.4.2	Professional Capacity of NGO Forum 54
6.4.3	Staff Development 54
6.4.4	Salaries, Recruitment and Promotion 55
6.5	Planning, Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation 55
6.5.1	Planning 55
6.5.2	Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation 56
7.	FINANCIAL ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT 58
7.1	Funding Pattern 58
7.2	Assessment of Financial Procedures 59
7.2.1	Internal Control Environment 59
7.2.2	Budget Planning and Management 60
7.2.3	Financial Reporting 61
7.2.4	Internal Audit 61
7.3	Assessment of Budget and Project Proposal 62
7.3.1	NGO Forum Own Income Potential 62
7.3.2	Cost Sharing within SDC/Danida Project 62
7.3.3	Cost Sharing between SDC and Danida 63
7.3.4	Cost Sharing with possible other Donors 64
7.3.5	Fulfilment of Donor Requirements with regard to Handling of Funds, Financial Reporting and Auditing 64

ANNEXES

- ANNEX 1: Terms of Reference for the Appraisal Team
- ANNEX 2: Selected List of Persons Met
- ANNEX 3: Draft Terms of Reference for a rapid survey of the Partner NGOs' Village Sanitation Centres
- ANNEX 4: NGO Forum Performance data and Targets, 1991-1999
- ANNEX 5: Comments to the draft appraisal report

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AT:	Appraisal Team
BRAC:	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
BUET:	Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology
CBO:	Community Based Organization
Danida:	Danish International Development Assistance
DPHE:	Department of Public Health Engineering
ICDDR,B:	International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh
ITN:	International Training Network
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organization
NGO Forum:	NGO Forum for Drinking Water and Sanitation
SDC:	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
UNDP:	United Nation's Development Fund
UNICEF:	United Nation's Children Fund
USD:	United States Dollar (Equivalent to 42 Taka)
VDC:	Village Development Committee
WHO:	World Health Organization

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

As a part of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation's (SDC) and Danida's general support to the rural water supply and sanitation sector in Bangladesh, the two donors have since 1992 supported the NGO Forum for Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation, hereinafter called NGO Forum.

NGO Forum was created in 1982 and defines itself as an apex organization for at present 560 partner Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Community Based Organizations (CBOs).

SDC and Danida jointly supported a 3 year phase (July 1992 to June 1995) of an "Integrated Water and Sanitation Programme through NGOs" implemented by the NGO Forum. Upon the recommendations of an external review team in early 1995, SDC and Danida decided to fund a one-year bridging phase (July 1995 to June 1996). The bridging phase was later extended to 31st December 1996.

NGO Forum has early September 1996 submitted to Danida and SDC a proposal for a new phase of the Programme (January 1997 to December 1999) with a request for funding. SDC and Danida jointly fielded an Appraisal Team (AT) which worked in Bangladesh during the period 23rd September to 20th October 1996. The Team comprised of the following members:

- Mr. Steffen Hvam, Water and Sanitation Engineer, External Consultant to Danida, Team Leader.
- Mr. Mirza Najmul Huda, Institutional Analyst, External Consultant to SDC, part time.
- Ms. Mahmuda Islam, Sociologist and Gender Specialist, Local Consultant to Danida, from 8/10 only.
- Mr. Sohel Kasem, Financial Analyst, External Consultant to SDC, part time.

Mr. Jens Gregersen, Technical Adviser to Danida joined the AT during the period 5th to 8th October.

Terms of reference for the AT are found in Annex 1. A selected list of persons met are attached as Annex 2. Before its departure from Bangladesh, the AT discussed its preliminary findings and recommendations with representatives from NGO Forum, SDC and the Danish Embassy, Dhaka.

The AT's findings and recommendations naturally focus on areas of difficulty, but this should not detract the attention from the many valuable suggestions in the NGO Forum Proposal, which formed the basis for the present appraisal.

The AT would like to express its thanks to all officials and individuals met for the kind support and valuable information which the AT received during its stay in Bangladesh and which highly facilitated the work of the AT.

1.2 Status of the Report

A draft report containing the views of the AT was submitted to Danida by November 1996. Through the Royal Danish Embassy in Dhaka, the draft report was sent to SDC and NGO Forum requesting any comments to be sent to the Royal Danish Embassy in Dhaka. The comments received from NGO Forum, SDC and the Royal Danish Embassy in Dhaka are attached as Annex 5. The comments have, where found relevant, been incorporated into this final version of the appraisal report. Some of the comments, in particular those related to the operationalization of the recommendations, have been incorporated in the Project Document rather than in this appraisal report.

All proposals in this final report are subject to approval by the parties involved.

SDC has in their comments to the draft appraisal report stressed that not all findings, interpretations and conclusions expressed in this report necessarily represent the views of SDC.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 Background

Approximately 50% of Bangladesh's population live in poverty and 25% in absolute poverty. 96% of female-headed households live in absolute poverty. In rural Bangladesh, the economic, political and social power is concentrated in a small group of large and medium landholders. They have access to public resources and facilities while the poor in general have very little access to or opportunity to enjoy these resources and facilities.

Sustained efforts have resulted in high water supply coverage, but there exists a number of unserved pockets, and the government water supply programmes have not been successful in reaching such pockets. In spite of high coverage with safe drinking water sources, no measurable impact in terms of reduced incidence in the frequency of diarrhoeal diseases and parasitic infections in children have been observed.

Access to and use of sanitary latrines in rural areas have increased significantly in recent years. The Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE), NGOs and the private sector produce latrines. DPHE and UNICEF is implementing a national project for promotion of sanitation and hygiene through social mobilization. A number of NGOs are working on health and hygiene mostly through integrated approach.

NGO Forum supports water supply and sanitation projects of more than 560 partner NGOs. Its main areas of activity are: i) capacity building among the partner NGOs, ii) channelling resources to the partner NGOs, and iii) general advocacy including promotional activities and information dissemination.

SDC and Danida have jointly supported NGO Forum since 1992. NGO Forum has submitted to Danida and SDC a proposal for continued funding until December 1999. The proposed budget amounts to Taka 138 million corresponding to USD 3,3 million.

2.2 Analysis and Assessment

General

There is an evident need to strengthen water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion activities with special emphasis on: i) community mobilization, ii) poverty orientation, iii) trans-sectoral integration, and iv) flexibility. NGO Forum and its partner NGOs have a number comparative advantages in this respect:

- NGO Forum works through a network of 560 large and small partner NGOs which are mainly working through community groups. Many of the NGOs have a network of field extension workers each covering 3-5 villages. They can maintain close links with the communities, to work in accordance with their priorities and to ensure a genuine poverty orientation with emphasis on women;

- the partner NGOs follow a trans-sectoral approach by linking promotion of water, sanitation and hygiene with a range of other activities such as credit, health and family planning;
- the partner NGOs can to a considerable extent be flexible in their approach;

Taking into consideration the present size of NGO Forum, it is limited as to how many different types of activities NGO Forum can support.

The Project visualises women's participation in site selection for installation of tubewell. It trains women as caretakers. In these ways the Project seeks to address the gender issues in water and sanitation. NGO Forum has not yet spelt out the strategy to operationalize the agenda of mainstreaming women as beneficiaries and key participants in planning and management. However, NGO Forum has the intention to do so in the near future. There is no specific strategy to ensure women's participation in the overall process. NGO Forum and its partners attach very low priority to gender. There is total absence of women at top level management in NGO Forum. The number of women staff is negligible and they are in the lower ranks. 60% of the partner NGOs field workers and a considerable part of their senior staff are women.

Water Supply

The partner NGOs spend considerable time in selecting a proper site for the installation. Water supply installations are implemented through the partner NGOs. The beneficiaries are providing a user contribution at 25%, except for the No.6 installations where the user contribution is 50%.

Due to their community orientation, NGOs are in a good position to install shallow tubewells with no. 6 pumps in remote and underserved pockets in the shallow water table area. In fact they may be the only ones doing it. They also have the necessary technical capacity. NGO Forum and the partner NGOs have very little experience in installing Tara pumps and different types of coastal belt technologies.

In the government programmes in the low water table area and in the coastal belt, pumps will mainly be given to people with influence. Partner NGOs could support underserved communities in getting access pumps from the government programmes.

In the longer run, donors are likely to withdraw their support to installation of Tara pumps through DPHE. There is a need to build up NGOs' capacity to install Tara pumps.

NGO Forum has no previous experience with rainwater harvesting, iron removal plants and ring wells. For these technologies, community mobilization is more important than technical capability. NGOs may have the necessary community orientation for achieving sustainable use of such technologies. In order to promote cost efficiency and genuine long term sustainability, there is a need to emphasize resinking of shallow tubewells and desanding of choked tubewells.

Sanitation

According to the NGO Forum proposal, the role of private producers should be strengthened by NGO Forum. It may be questioned whether NGO Forum and its partner NGOs have any comparative advantages for this. The potential for involving the private producers in sales of latrine components in remote rural areas should not be overestimated.

NGO Forum supports the establishment of partner NGO village sanitation centres in areas without private producers by providing moulds, tools funds for a revolving fund and training. There are obvious advantages linked with partner NGOs' latrine production in remote areas.

NGO Forum promote water seal latrines, sanplats and home-made latrines.

Training

There is an evident need for capacity building among partner NGOs through increased training efforts. The partner NGOs give high priority to training. NGO Forum is in a favourable position to conduct such training.

NGO Forum seems to rely too much on own capacity to carry out all aspects of the training process rather than using consultants.

As compared to the present situation, the NGO Forum proposal for 1997-99 includes a slightly higher number of training courses, but spread over a larger number of different types of courses. Scarce resources in NGO Forum could be utilized better if the number of different types of training courses is reduced. The AT finds that approximately 70 training courses for NGO staff and 225 caretaker training courses would be appropriate.

The most needed training courses are: i) training of trainers, ii) training in social mobilization for water and sanitation, and iii) training on community participation and management of water and sanitation programmes. Refresher training is included in most of the courses.

Partner NGOs carry out caretaker training. 80% of the trainees are women.

Communication Materials

NGO Forum holds consultation with UNICEF in designing training packages and other materials. There is need to broaden and strengthen such collaboration.

The proposed types of materials are too many. A proposal to reduce the number of different types of materials is given in the Project Document. Though the achievements of NGO Forum with regard to producing communication materials to other agencies is acknowledged, NGO Forum is not an expert in communication. Advertising firms and a few large NGOs are the experts in this line.

Gender bias has been manifested in communication materials. In visual presentations traditional role and image of women are highlighted.

Promotional Activities and Information Dissemination

NGO Forum has several comparative advantages in carrying out promotional activities, such as to operate through the NGOs at the grassroots level. Partner NGOs normally work through their groups, while NGO Forum aims at addressing the entire community.

Promotional activities proposed to be undertaken are too many. A proposal to reduce the number of different types of promotional activities is given in the Project Document.

Promotional activities do not include gender issue as a priority area. Communication materials that are used to promote community awareness manifest gender bias.

The proposed media and channels seem to be appropriate for the grassroots and are acceptable to the community. The impact of the promotional activities will be more enduring if the messages are followed up by interpersonal communication.

Advocacy and Information Services

The advocacy packages includes more than ten activities which is too much. A proposal to reduce the number of activities in the advocacy package is given in the Project Document.

Organizational Issues

At present, NGO Forum works directly with over 560 partners comprising of CBOs, local NGOs (working in 10 thanas or less), national level NGOs, and several international NGOs. Discrimination against local NGOs/CBOs in favour of support given to national NGOs was not observed.

NGO Forum has consciously not been a membership organization. It has a small general membership comprising of 16 persons who constitute the General Committee. The governing board is the Executive Committee with 8 members.

There is a need for organizational development within NGO Forum. The organizational structure does not show a clustering of similar tasks under a manageable number of divisions. There is no formal management team comprising of senior staff who could participate equally with the Director in decision making and management.

The professional capacity is inadequate with respect to the managerial and implementation skills that are necessary for an apex organization. There are many employees that do not have the professional competence that is needed for the specific job that he/she performs.

The salary levels are below average, considering that NGO Forum is a network organization. The salary structure currently in place is comparable to those of other leading national NGOs.

Monitoring and Reporting

With regard to monitoring and reporting, too much information are collected and documented. The information is not presented in summarized, easily understood form. The management may not be able to use the information for corrective and timely decision making. Currently, there is no internal culture of routinely using monitoring information for decision making at different levels. Monitoring should not be used to provide information to serve the donors' requirements only.

Financial Issues

NGO Forum has been receiving assistance from among others SDC and Danida and the two organizations CAFOD and MISEREOR. MISEREOR has committed funds up to end June 1997. Apart from this, no funds have been committed by donors for 1997 and onwards. NGO Forum is entirely dependent on external funds and is, therefore limited in the scope of its activities by the reality of donor priorities and the availability of funds.

NGO Forum's potential for raising funds from other sources than donors is deemed to be modest. SDC states, however, in its comments to the draft appraisal report that NGO Forum should strive for, and develop a minimum of financial autonomy.

So far, SDC contributed 60% while Danida contributed 40% of the total SDC/Danida funds. In the future SDC will concentrate on the low water table area while Danida will concentrate on the other areas.

The NGO Forum Proposal allocated all NGO Forum costs to the proposed SDC/Danida programme, on the assumption that only this programme will be implemented. This assumption may or may not hold good.

2.3 Recommendations

General

SDC and Danida should continue to support NGO Forum and its partner organization. The time frame should be 3 years. A joint SDC/Danida mid-term review should adjust the programme as appropriate in the light of the general development within the sector.

NGO Forum should identify the areas, where they have comparative advantages and concentrate on such activities.

Water Supply

The present community mobilization activities should continue. The installations should be subsidized as proposed by NGO Forum.

The following types and numbers of water supply installations should be carried out: i) 3,000 shallow tubewells with No. 6 pumps, ii) 750 tara pump installations, iii) 150 rainwater harvesting schemes, iv) 100 iron removal plants, v) 100 ring wells, and vi) resinking of 600 choked tubewells. The Programme should not install shallow shrouded tubewells and pond sand filters.

Partner NGOs should concentrate on mobilizing and supporting poor and neglected communities in getting tubewells from donor supported DPHE programmes. A number (e.g. 25%) of installations could be reserved for NGO projects in such a way that NGOs will be responsible for community mobilization, site selection and caretaker training while the DPHE project will be responsible for hardware implementation.

Sanitation

NGO Forum should only indirectly promote private sector involvement in production of latrine components.

The support to partner NGOs village sanitation centres should in principle be continued as stated in the Proposal. SDC has in their comments to the draft appraisal report stated that they find the level of this support too high. Before a final decision about support to the NGO Forum sanitation programme is taken a rapid survey of the performance of the existing centres should be undertaken.

The strategy for mobile production and sales should be operationalized and promoted more vigorously.

Training

The number of different types of training courses should be reduced in accordance with an in-depth assessment to be carried out with assistance from local consultants. Training of trainers and training in social mobilization for water and sanitation may be among the most needed courses. The number such courses should be increased considerably. The duration of some training courses should be increased.

NGO Forum should use local consultants e.g. in connection with: i) needs assessment, ii) review of existing training packages, iii) development and field testing of training courses, and iv) monitoring of the effect of the training.

NGO Forum should sensitize partner NGOs about gender perspective. They should prepare a operational strategy with time-frame. More women should be recruited as trainer. Number of women trainees should be increased.

Communication Materials

NGO Forum should further engage consultants for development and production of communication materials.

NGO Forum should work out a strategy for communication material and concentrate on fewer ones which are most needed and important for promotional activities, in particular for interpersonal communication.

All materials should be made gender-responsive by clearly indicating men's involvement.

Promotional Activities and Information Dissemination

The number of promotional activities and information dissemination should be reduced. NGO Forum should prioritize its activities and concentrate on those which are more important and where they can make more impact.

Special emphasis should be given to promotion through community groups established by partner NGOs, and interpersonal communication should be strengthened



Advocacy and Information Services

NGO Forum should concentrate on advocacy and information services activities which produce a direct effect.

Organizational Aspects

NGO Forum should seek donor support in availing services of organizational development experts who could facilitate the process and encourage changes from within.

Certain functions should be clustered such as: i) training, information, development communication, technical, ii) field operations, and iii) finance, administration, personnel, logistics; each having a team leader reporting to the Director. Functions such as internal audit, monitoring and evaluation should be within the Director's supervision. A formal management team should be set up comprising of the Director and the three division leaders.

Staff salaries should be increased. SDC has in its comments to the draft appraisal report expressed some reservation in this regard.

Monitoring and Reporting

NGO Forum should develop simple monitoring and reporting formats and the monitoring data should be used as a management tool.

Financial Aspects

The following cost sharing between SDC and Danida could be applied: i) all costs, which can be directly related to a specific area, could be included in the budget for this area, and ii) all costs, which can not be directly linked to a specific area, could be sub-divided in accordance with the geographic size of the different areas.

A cost sharing arrangement between SDC/Danida and possible other donors supporting NGO Forum has to be agreed upon before the signing of agreements between SDC/Danida and NGO Forum. Reference is made to section 7.3.4.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Socio-Economic Situation

Bangladesh is a country of small land mass with a population of approximately 800 persons per square kilometre. In economic terms, it is one of the poorest countries in the world. Agriculture is the main source of income giving employment to 23% of the population.

Some relevant data are quoted from Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics:

Crude birth rate (%):	2.65%
Crude death rate (%):	0.84%
Infant mortality rate (%):	7.50%
Maternal mortality rate (%):	0.45%
Household size (persons):	5.5
Literacy rate (%):	44.3
Per capita income (USD):	259

These are however average rates and do not disclose the wide variation among the classes, among the rich and the poor, the landholders and the landless.

Approximately 50% of the population live in poverty defined in terms of intake below 2122 kcal/day. The poorest of the poor whose intake is below 1805 kcal/day constitute approximately 25% of the total population. This class of absolute poor are without regular source of livelihood and do not own any homestead. Poverty has also a gender dimension. In rural Bangladesh, 15% of the households are headed by women and 96% of these female-headed households live in absolute poverty.

Less than 49% of the rural population own land and a gross disparity in the size of land holdings exists among the large, medium, small and marginal landholders.

In this class-based society, economic, political and social power is concentrated in the large and medium landholders who constitute the smallest group. They dominate the society as community leaders, as elected public representatives in local government institutions and as government-nominated members of different committees. They, therefore have access to use and distribution of public resources and facilities and, in the process, appropriate the lion's share and allocate the residue to persons of their choice. The poor in general are deprived and have very little access or opportunity to enjoy government resources and facilities.

The poor do not have access to the minimum basic necessities of life. The per capita bed room space available is 55 square feet, while the floating and homeless poor have no room space at all. In these circumstances, environment in which most people live is not congenial and healthy. They are ignorant of the basic principles of hygiene and live in surroundings which lack minimum requirement of hygiene and sanitation.

1 Institutional
+
describe NGO forum.

3.2 Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Sector

3.2.1 Sector Organizations and Donors

Government Institutions

With reference to the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (MLGRD&C), the Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) is among others responsible for the provision of water supply and sanitation facilities in rural areas. DPHE has a wide network of offices at circle, divisional, sub-divisional and thana level throughout the country. At the lowest level, i.e. thana, DPHE is staffed with a sub-assistant engineer and 4 tubewell mechanics.

In rural areas, DPHE provides heavily subsidized point source water supplies and moderately subsidized latrine components from village sanitation centres; in general 2 centres per thana. Furthermore, DPHE trains tubewell caretakers and conducts social mobilization for sanitation campaigns heavily supported by UNICEF.

Sector Planning

Attempts have been made to prepare a comprehensive plan for the water supply and sanitation sector. Thus, a number of situation analyses, sector studies, strategy documents, policy statements and perspective plans have been prepared. However, a comprehensive plan for the sector with a clear government ownership of the plan and taking into consideration the views of the main donors has not yet been prepared.

Given the general political situation in Bangladesh as well as the specific situation within the sector, such a comprehensive sector plan may not be prepared and approved in the near future.

NGOs

A large number of NGOs implement water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion activities as an integrated part of their community oriented activities. More than 560 of the NGOs are organized in NGO Forum, which covers the entire country through a head office and 10 regional offices. Each regional office is staffed with a regional officer, 1-2 programme organizers and administrative staff.

NGO Forum is an apex organization for the NGOs. Its main areas of activity are: i) capacity building among the partner NGOs, in particular through training and ad-hoc support, ii) channelling of funds, materials for water supply installations, and communication materials to the partner NGOs, and iii) general advocacy including promotional activities and information dissemination.

Some, mainly large, NGOs implement their own water supply and sanitation programmes funded directly by different donors rather than through NGO Forum. Such programmes are to varying degrees implemented independently from the NGO Forum supported activities.

Donors

The main donor to the DPHE rural water supply and sanitation programme has for the last two decades been UNICEF, with Danida and SDC providing the major share of the funds. It appears that UNICEF, mainly due to financial constraints, will cut down the support to DPHE.

Danida considers to provide bilateral funds through DPHE for a rural water supply and sanitation programme in parts of or in the entire coastal belt. The modalities for such a programme have not yet been decided upon. It has been suggested that Danida could promote the future development within the sector taking into consideration the comparative advantages of the different actors. Thus, DPHE may concentrate on hardware delivery and NGOs may play one of the key roles in community mobilization and site selection, as well as possibly also in caretaker training and promotion of sanitation and hygiene.

SDC considers to support a programme in the low water table area through or in collaboration with DPHE. The modalities for such a programme have not yet been decided upon. It has, however, been suggested that SDC should promote the role of DPHE to facilitate rather than being directly involved in delivery of hardware as well as software services. The private sector is envisaged to play a key role in hardware delivery.

A number of donors have supported NGO projects within the water supply and sanitation sector during the recent years.

NGO Forum has since 1992 received a major share of its funds from SDC and Danida. The two catholic NGOs CAFOD and MISEREOR have supported a project in the Chittagong area. This project will end in December 1996, but a one year consolidation period is being considered. A MISEREOR supported training project will run until June 1997. A continuation of this project has not been considered. Furthermore, NGO Forum has received funds from UNICEF in connection with partner NGO participation in the DPHE/UNICEF Social Mobilization for Sanitation Project. The NGO Forum participation ended in May 1996, and there is no possibility yet of a second phase of it.

3.2.2 Water Supply

Sustained efforts have resulted in high water supply coverage in the rural areas. There are 1 million public hand pump tubewells and more than 1.6 million private tubewells in Bangladesh. More than 90% of all tubewells are operating at any one time. Among the rural population, 85% have access to tubewell water within 150 metres of their homes and 97% use tubewell water for drinking. Still, 84% of the population do not use tubewell water for all their domestic needs.

With regard to rural water supply, Bangladesh can be divided into four area types:

- Shallow water table area covers a major part of Bangladesh. Shallow tubewells with No. 6 suction pumps are the most appropriate technology. The coverage with safe water supply installations is in general high, i.e. on average one handpump per 70 persons, according to UNICEF. However, a number of unserved pockets exists, and the DPHE water supply programmes have not been very successful in reaching such neglected pockets.
- Low water table area covers an increasing part of rural Bangladesh and is expected to cover approximately 40% of the country by the year 2010. In the low water table area, No. 6 suction hand pumps become non-operational for several months per year mainly due to increased abstraction of groundwater used for irrigation. The low water table area is underserved, i.e. on average one handpump per 185 persons, according to UNICEF.
- Coastal belt covers the area near the Bay of Bengal. Approximately 7-8 million people reside in this area. In large parts of the coastal belt, fresh groundwater is available only at great depth, if available at all. The technological options are in most areas deep tubewells, but also shallow shrouded tubewells, pond sand filters and rainwater harvesting are at places appropriate technologies. The coastal belt is underserved, i.e. on average one installation per 252 persons, according to UNICEF.
- Stony layer areas cover the Chittagong Hill Tracts and some areas of northern Bangladesh. An estimated 3-4 million people live in such areas. Stony layers prevent hand drilling, and either digging of ring wells or mechanized drilling rigs are required. In other cases, rainwater harvesting is the only option.

In the DPHE programmes, the community is involved in applying for tubewells through user groups. Though the installations are heavily subsidized, the communities will contribute in cash to the installation cost and be solely responsible for the maintenance of the tubewells. There are indications that often political influence rather than need determines who gets the tubewells. Thus, the DPHE programmes have difficulties in reaching the poorest and most neglected sections of the rural population.

3.2.3 Sanitation

In spite of high coverage with safe drinking water sources, no measurable impact in terms of reduced incidence in the frequency of diarrhoeal diseases and parasitic infections in children have been observed. As a consequence, special attention is now given to the promotion of sanitation.

Access to sanitary latrines in rural areas have increased significantly in recent years, rising from 16% of the households in 1990 to more than 40% at present. The vast majority of the latrines are installed without any direct government support. An estimated 70% of the latrines are of the home-made type made of locally available materials such as bamboo. Such latrines may to varying degrees may be called sanitary and may in some parts of the

country be less appropriate due to very high water table and soil which collapses easily.

According to a survey from 1992, 90% of the families with sanitary latrines use it regularly. However, 71% of the rural population still pollute the environment through the use of non-sanitary latrines or even open defecation. Furthermore, the use of sanitary latrines by children under five years of age is below 10%.

Children pass urine and stool here and there. Men normally use the open space. The most disadvantageous group is the women who either go to the bush, if possible, or wait till sunset to go to nearby open space for privacy. These practices pollute the environment.

Every year 250,000 children under the age of 5 years die of diarrhoeal diseases. Dysentery, diarrhoea, worms, other gastro-intestinal ailments, jaundice, typhoid, and skin diseases are some of the most frequently experienced diseases in Bangladesh and these are mostly environmentally related.

technologies

The following types of latrines and channels of distribution are available in rural areas:

- DPHE village sanitation centres are found in all thana centres and in few of the union headquarters. DPHE produces subsidized water seal slabs and rings.
- A number of NGOs run village sanitation centres at union headquarters level. These centres have so far only produced water seal latrines. The production is not subsidized directly.
- A considerable number of private producers of latrines have emerged during the recent years. The private producers are located near the potential markets which mainly are in thana centres and along some major roads. Most producers make slabs without water seal and the production is done on a profit basis.
- For the better-off rural population, new options such as slabs with plastic pans and off-set latrines are gradually emerging through the private sector.
- Home made latrines constructed from locally available materials, such as bamboo are being promoted by DPHE/UNICEF and some NGOs.
- On a limited scale, DPHE and some NGOs have experience with mobile production of latrine components. WHO is presently undertaking a study of mobile production and sale of latrine components.

of course

3.2.4 Training

DPHE

DPHE is conducting regular refresher training of its own field staff. The training is not open to staff from other organizations.

DPHE is conducting training of one caretaker family per new water installation. The training is carried out by DPHE's field staff, in particular the tubewell mechanics. Though improvements have been observed in cases where UNICEF pays a bonus to the DPHE field staff for conducting the caretaker training, the quality and duration of the training is reported to be far from satisfactory.

NGOs

NGO Forum conducts a number of training courses for the staff of its partner NGOs. Among these can be mentioned: i) training of trainers, ii) tubewell sinking training, iii) training of masons and accountants for the village sanitation centres, and iv) training in social mobilization for sanitation. The partner NGOs organizes training of caretakers.

Large NGOs carry out training courses for their own staff by using their own training facilities.

Others

To the knowledge of the AT, other organizations are not involved in systematic training within the rural water supply and sanitation sector.

With funds from Danida, the Regional Water and Sanitation Group under UNDP/World Bank is at present, through DPHE, field testing an improved concept for caretaker family training. The results achieved so far are encouraging, and the concept is expected to be ready for replication at the end of 1997. } Ask

The Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) has just established an International Training Network (ITN) Centre supported by the UNDP/World Bank, Regional Water and Sanitation Group with funds provided by Danida. The aim of the ITN Centre is among others to improve the training within the rural water supply and sanitation sector through conducting training courses and providing consultancy services in e.g: i) training needs assessment, ii) design and field testing of training courses, and iii) assessment of the effect of training. The ITN Centre at BUET was launched on 19 December 1996. } Ask

3.2.5 Hygiene Promotion

DPHE and UNICEF is implementing a national project for promotion of sanitation and hygiene through social mobilization. The main activities of this project are: i) high level advocacy, ii) develop communication materials and training packages, iii) strengthen DPHE's capacity to promote sanitation and hygiene, iv) support allies including NGOs, and v) conduct action research studies.

A number of NGOs are working on health and hygiene promotion mostly through integrated approach. They include international, national and local NGOs. BRAC, Bangladesh Women's Health Coalition, World Vision, Redda Barnen (Sweden), CARE and ICDDR,B are among those working on hygiene promotion as part of their overall programme. VHSS, as an apex body of national and local NGOs working within the health sector, coordinates the promotional activities of its partners. UNICEF facilitates development of communication materials on health and hygiene education. Each organization follows its own strategy, approach and priority. ICDDR,B concentrates on research, World Vision works for promotion of health & hygiene and provides clinical services. CARE's project on sanitation and family health education promotes participatory hygiene education.

3.3 NGO Sector in General

The Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Bangladesh are, in general, making a substantial contribution to development with programmes in more than 20,000 villages throughout Bangladesh. In fact, NGOs work in all 460 thanas of Bangladesh.

The NGOs consist of a large number of organizations that vary in origin, size, objectives and strategies. The overwhelming majority of registered NGOs (over 18,000) are small welfare oriented groups characterized by their charitable approach. Over 1,000 are development oriented NGOs aiming at promoting self-reliance among their target group.

The number of registered and active NGOs receiving external funds has increased significantly from 113 in 1981 to 1,043 in September 1996.

An NGO assessment study conducted by the Asian Development Bank in mid 1992 has pointed out that the focus of most development oriented NGOs is on poverty reduction through income generation projects resulting from self-employment and credit. Non-formal education, health/family planning, environment and women are the other critical issues that are frequently addressed by the development oriented NGOs in Bangladesh.

In terms of external support, over USD 259 million was provided to NGOs during 1995-96 by various donors. These donors have demonstrated their confidence in the effectiveness of NGO activities so that the level of funds available has risen over the years. However, around 80% of such donor funds go to only about 30 NGOs. Up to June 1993, the water and sanitation sector had 27 projects with an allocation of USD 12 million.

According to the above mentioned study, the comparative advantage of NGOs includes their proximity, trust/credibility, commitment, flexibility and responsiveness. One major difference between NGO and government projects has been the NGOs' ability to identify and involve beneficiaries in such projects. NGOs are also able to promote and instil the concept of self-reliance and democracy among the project beneficiaries.

With the exception of a few large NGOs (BRAC for example has a full time staff of over 15,300), most of the others are small, usually with fewer than ten staff, less experienced and consequently suffer from several constraints such as inadequate long term strategy, lack of monitoring and evaluation skills, weak management and inadequate professional and technical skills.

NGO weaknesses as perceived by the government administration include lack of accountability, lack of coordination, high costs and lack of self-reliance.

There are certain trends that are emerging in the NGO sector in Bangladesh. These are the rapid growth of the sector, a corresponding increase in the competition for resources among the NGOs, evolving relationship between government and NGOs, increased awareness among NGOs to link with other groups in civil society, and the formation and establishment of sectoral fora. The NGO Forum is an example of such a network that enable NGOs, both big and small, to come together to define a more focused agenda and to find ways to advance this agenda cooperatively. Sectoral fora also provide the mechanism for strengthening accountability and transparency.

3.4 NGO Forum

NGO Forum for Drinking Water Supply & Sanitation was founded in 1982 to support drinking water supply and sanitation projects of the grassroots NGOs in Bangladesh.

The vision of NGO Forum is that all people use hygienic latrine and safe water for all purposes. NGO Forum's goals are sustainable change of hygiene behaviour, gender balanced water and sanitation programme, empowered people, and clean environment. The organization's mission is to help reduce mortality and morbidity caused by water-borne diseases through appropriate low-cost interventions.

NGO Forum is registered as a national NGO with the NGO Affairs Bureau since May 1991. It has a head office with a training centre and ten regional offices spread over Bangladesh.

The organization is governed by an Executive Committee comprising of seven elected and one ex-officio member. The elected members are representatives of sixteen General Committee members. The day-to-day management vests with the Director and his staff of 110, of which 63 are at the central office in Dhaka and 47 at the ten regional offices.

3.5 Description of NGO Forum Proposal

Goal

The goal of the programme proposed by NGO Forum is that a community based networking and service delivery process is established for facilitating and promoting safe water, environmental sanitation and personal hygiene within the programme intervention area.

Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the proposed programme are:

- community awareness on the water and sanitation programme is created and the implementing capacity of partner organizations is strengthened;
- a strong network between and among water and sanitation partners is established;
- more people in the programme intervention areas use hygienic latrines;
- sufficient safe water is made accessible to more people in programme intervention areas.

improve

X

X

Target Beneficiaries

The target beneficiaries of the proposed programme are: i) partner NGOs, ii) Community Based Organizations, iii) private producers, and iv) unserved and underserved community people (women and men).

Overall Strategy

Most of NGO Forum's previous activities will be retained, but increased attention will be given to software aspects. Thus, NGO Forum will concentrate to play the role as an apex organization by taking up various pragmatic networking strategies like linking the community with the private sector, linking water and sanitation activities with credit, transferring ownership to the community and full trans-sectoral collaboration. Village Development Committees will be established to be overall responsible for the development of the villages.

*related to
? water
o cons?
both*

Try it at first!

Sanitation will be given the highest priority. In addition to continued production at partner NGO village sanitation centres, the role of private producers will be promoted.

In areas where water supply and sanitation hardware is sufficient, the NGO Forum will concentrate on the delivery of software support services like promotion, information and training. Water supply hardware support will be centred only in the areas with least access to safe water.

The cost of installing hardware will be shared by the proposed programme and the beneficiaries. The users of water supply installations will contribute 25% of the installation cost (50% in case of the No. 6 pump) and pay all maintenance costs. Latrine components will not be subsidized.

? flat rate trial?

Main Activities

The main activities of the proposed programme are:

disjointed

- establishment of water supply installations: i) 1200 Tara pumps, ii) 1500 No. 6 pumps, iii) 500 shallow shrouded tubewells, 150 pond sand filters, iv) 150 rainwater harvesting plants, and v) 300 iron removal plants;
- establishment of 180 new and relocation of 72 existing village sanitation centres;
- carry out 23 different types of training courses comprising a total of 150 courses[?] for partner NGO staff as well as 293 caretaker training courses;
- hygiene promotion through: i) courtyard meetings, ii) non-school going girls' orientation, and iii) rally/miking/mobile film show;
- capacity building of community based allies through: i) school programme, ii) imam training and orientation, and iii) youth training; *perhaps mapping -*
- capacity building of partners through: i) local discussion forum, ii) orientation of Village Development Committees, iii) partner NGO staff orientation, and iv) exchange visits; *♀?*
- development of a wide range of communication materials including manuals, brochures, newsletters and posters; *X*
- advocacy;
- information services through: i) inter-personal media, ii) audio-visual media, iii) print media, and iv) establishment of an information processing and learning centre.
- monitoring of: i) NGO Forum's own activities, ii) water and sanitation performance of partner organizations, and iii) water and sanitation behaviour of community members;
- organizational development through: i) training (in-house, in-country and abroad), ii) self evaluation, iii) job analyses, and iv) research studies for possible revenue generating ventures.

Programme Period

The programme is proposed to be implemented over a 3 year period (January 1997 - December 1999).

Budget

The proposed budget amounts to Taka 138 million corresponding to USD 3,3 million and to be evenly distributed over the 3 years.

Geographically, the budget proposed by NGO Forum can be split-up as follows:

-	Low water table area:	Taka 82 million
-	Coastal belt and shallow water table area:	Taka 56 million
<hr/>		
	Total:	Taka 138 million

With regard to activities, the budget can be split-up as follows:

7	-	Software activities:	Taka 49 million
	-	Hardware activities:	Taka 55 million
	-	Organizational development:	Taka 6 million
	-	Capital expenditures:	Taka 7 million
	-	Administrative cost:	Taka 20 million
<hr/>			
	Total:	Taka 138 million	

4. GENERAL ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT

4.1 The Need for the Project

In spite of a considerable and commendable effort by the Government of Bangladesh to increase the coverage of safe water supply and sanitary latrines, no measurable impact of the efforts in terms of reduced incidence in the frequency of diarrhoeal diseases and parasitic infections in children has been observed. There is, therefore, not only a considerable need to strengthen the above efforts, but also to supplement with alternative approaches emphasizing: i) community mobilization, ii) poverty orientation, iii) trans-sectoral integration, and iv) flexibility.

The NGO Forum and its network of partner NGOs have a number of comparative advantages which makes it natural for them to play an important and increasing role within the sector. Reference is made to section 4.2 below.

NGO Forum is in general implementing its projects well and in a cost efficient manner, which is confirmed in two recent external evaluations. Though there is scope for improvements, the staff appear reasonable competent and devoted to its work. *See*

The AT, therefore, finds that SDC and Danida should continue to support NGO Forum and its partner organizations.

4.2 Comparative Advantages and Disadvantages of NGO Forum and its Partner NGOs

Advantages

NGO Forum and its partner NGOs have a number of important comparative advantages:

- NGO Forum has a well established organization with a head office and 10 regional offices.
- *exactly how?* NGO Forum works through a network of 560 large and small partner NGOs and community based organizations which are mainly working through community groups. Many of the NGOs have a network of field extension workers each covering 3-5 villages. In this way, it is possible to maintain close links with the communities, to work in accordance with their priorities and to ensure a genuine poverty orientation through community empowerment. The partner NGOs do not have to work through the local power structure. They can, therefore, give better emphasis to remote, poor and neglected communities which often do not receive their share of resources provided by government programmes.

- The partner NGOs follow a trans-sectoral approach by linking promotion of water, sanitation and hygiene with a range of other activities such as credit, health and family planning. This is likely to increase the impact of the water supply and sanitation activities rather than if a traditional sectoral approach is applied. UNICEF in its Master Plan of Operations for 1996-2000 also increasingly promotes a trans-sectoral approach through an Accelerated District Approach. In particular, the partner NGOs' application of credit in connection with provision of water supply and sanitation hardware will make hardware accessible for a much larger section of the communities.
- The partner NGOs work trans-sectorial, while NGO Forum works sectorial. This is by the AT deemed to be strong combination.
- Due to their size, the large partner NGOs could work efficiently on their own, while the small partner NGOs and the community based organizations are dependent on NGO Forum for efficient intervention within the water supply and sanitation sector. This applies in particular to training, promotional activities, provision of communication materials, and ad-hoc support to the partner NGOs.
- There is less administration for the donors when they provide support to the small NGOs through NGO Forum rather than by allocating small amounts of funds to a large number of NGOs. This applies in particular to hardware support.
- The partner NGOs can to some extent be flexible in their subsidy strategy balancing people's ability to pay with the need for a proper level of user contribution to ensure genuine community ownership. They do not have to consider tactical (party) political considerations in their subsidy strategy.
- Partner NGOs are in an excellent position to ensure that sites for pumps are fully accessible for all community members and in accordance with the womens' preferences. The risk is less that tubewells eventually get "privatized" by a local influential person. Partner NGOs also have a potential for supporting neglected communities in getting access to e.g. tubewells from DPHE's donor supported programmes.
- As compared to government programmes, partner NGOs can be flexible in their production and sale of latrine components as they do not have to follow strict production targets and procedures.
- NGO Forum can be flexible in their software approach. As an example, the training can to some extent currently be adapted to the identified needs.

Disadvantages

- Taking into consideration the present size and professional capacity of NGO Forum, it is limited as to how many different types of activities NGO Forum can support.

- NGO Forum and its partner NGOs have in reality only experience in installing shallow tubewell with No. 6 pumps, which is a very simple technology and which is known throughout Bangladesh. Other rural water supply technologies are more complicated. In the case of Tara pumps, which are to be installed in large numbers in the future, it may be feasible to gradually build capacity within the NGO sector. For other technologies, such as pond sand filters and shallow shrouded tubewells, NGOs do not have comparative advantages as compared to more engineering oriented organizations.
- Training is another area where NGO Forum does not have the capacity to spread too much, unless they get assistance in designing the training activities.
- With regard to promotion of the private sector, NGO Forum is not seen to have many comparative advantages.

Conclusion

The above mentioned disadvantages could partly be reduced by expanding the staff and capacity of NGO Forum. The AT will not recommend such an expansion. NGO Forum has already expanded considerably during the recent years, and there is a genuine risk that the efficiency of NGO Forum will be reduced and that the present balance of activities between NGO Forum and its partner NGOs may be disturbed.

NGO Forum should identify the areas, where the need for water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion is greatest and where they have comparative advantages and concentrate on such activities rather than try to build up capacity to do everything.

4.3 General Assessment of the NGO Forum Proposal

The NGO Forum Proposal dated 5th September 1996 can in general serve as basis for implementation of future NGO activities. The AT agrees upon many of the issues presented in the Proposal. However, a number of revisions are required, as elaborated below.

The time frame for the proposed programme is three years and with no phasing. There is no in-built flexibility for revision/modification of activities in order to fit into a possible future sector programme. The AT finds this acceptable taking into consideration: i) the relative short time frame of the proposed programme, ii) that an operational sector programme may not be prepared and approved by the Government in the very near future, and iii) future SDC and Danida supported sector programmes may not start in the near future either. The AT has proposed a joint SDC/Danida mid-term review during the second half of year 2. During this review, adjustments of the programme should be considered, as appropriate in the light of the general development within the sector up to then.

The AT has highlighted the following general aspects in the NGO Forum proposal:

- the Proposal does not fully take into consideration the comparative advantages of NGO Forum as described in section 4.2 above;
- the Proposal has in general stricken a proper balance of being an organization for the partner organizations and taking direct part in project implementation. However, the proposed introduction of a number of new technologies may affect this balance adversely;
- the balance between hardware and software is in general acceptable. However, a number of partner NGOs emphasizes hardware support from NGO Forum. The recent introduction of a number of new technologies may also endanger the proposed hardware-software balance;
- there is a tendency in the Proposal of relying too much on in-house professional capacity rather than hiring local consultants for special purposes;
- the Proposal lacks a strategy for the future role of NGO Forum and its partner NGOs beyond 1999 and in accordance with the general development within the sector. However, NGO Forum has stated that it is a priority work them very soon to develop a perspective plan. In fact, the preparation of such a plan was initiated during a planning workshop in July 1996.

The above findings are operationalized in the following chapters and have been incorporated in the Project Document prepared by the AT in collaboration with NGO Forum.

4.4 Poverty Orientation

The Project aims at facilitating and promoting safe water, environmental sanitation and personal hygiene at community level with special emphasis on underserved and neglected communities. The poor who do not have proper access to safe water and hygienic sanitation and who normally do not benefit much from government programmes is the primary target group of the Project.

Only groups with no nearby safe water sources will be provided with water supply installations from the Project. The installations will be subsidized by the Project and the partner NGOs will be encouraged to provide credit from their own funds.

Poor families' need for latrines will be taking into account by encouraging the partner NGOs to provide credit from their own funds for purchase of different types of latrines. For those who can not even afford this, inexpensive home-made but reasonably sanitary latrines will be promoted, wherever possible.

*latrines?
Don't know
construction
through allies*

The Project will encourage the poor to invest in sanitation and safe water so that they will not have to spend on treatment of diarrhoea which occurs mainly due to insanitary conditions and impure water. The poor can also benefit from the Project's hygiene promotion activities, as the poor in particular suffers from the effect of living in an unhygienic environment.

4.5 Gender Issues

In the project proposal, NGO Forum stated its project goal, broad objective, project purpose and specific objectives without any specific mention of women. However, woman as a group is included as target beneficiaries along with men and gender issue has been identified as one of the salient features of the Project. In recognition of women's paramount role in water and sanitation management and in view of their vulnerability to water-borne diseases women have been identified as mainstream beneficiaries and key actors in planning, operation and management. The Project also proposes to make women's everyday life easier.

The Project visualises women's participation in site selection for installation of tubewell. It trains women as caretaker and also as mason. Currently 80% of the caretakers are women. In these ways the Project seeks to address the gender issues in water and sanitation.

NGO Forum has not yet spelt out the strategy to operationalize the agenda of mainstreaming women as beneficiaries and key participants in planning and management. However, NGO Forum has the intention to do so in the near future. There is no specific strategy to ensure women's participation in the overall process. NGO Forum is silent about women's role in selection of sanitation technology and the benefit of hygienic sanitation on women.

It is being increasingly recognized that lack of sanitation affects women more detrimentally, because men or children can use open space anytime, but women have to wait till sunset for privacy. Though NGO Forum defines the role of women as the key actors in planning, operation and maintenance, it has not been translated into action. Women so far remained outside the planning and decision making. There is total absence of women at top level management. In central office at Dhaka, number of women staff is negligible and the few women staff are in the lower ranks. In the regional office women constitute one third of the personnel power. However 60 percent of the field workers are women. But they carry out operational activities in the field and have no access to planning, decision making and management. Women are, thus, subjected to imbalance in terms of number as well as in the scale of importance.

Not only the NGO Forum but also their partners attach very low priority to gender. While asked about goals and objectives of their programme none identified gender as a priority issue. Programme Managers and staff of the partners did not demonstrate awareness about gender issues. Partners need intensive orientation about gender so that they are able to set priority for gender within their respective organizations.

Relation of WATSAN to VDC?

Village Development Committee (VDC) has been assigned the responsibility of management and follow-up of water and sanitation programme at the community level. VDC, therefore, has to perform monitoring role too. But there is no specific emphasis about ensuring participation of women in the process. There is a terms of reference of VDC which spells out procedures of formation of VDC, its objectives and working strategies. Objectives and working strategies do not refer to women. Procedure of formation includes representation of women along with all other sectors and local power structure. However it does not specify the proportion of women member. There is also no mention about representation of women in Ad-hoc alliance. In practice, VDCs included reasonable number of women; but it is nonetheless advisable to specify the number as a standard for guidance of all VDCs.

As an apex networking body, Forum plans to continue collaboration and coordination meeting with policy makers at the national level and opinion leaders at the community levels. Representation for the coordination meetings is proposed to include local government representatives, school teachers, religious leaders and the mass media. Women are not mentioned. In its policy on sanitary promotion the Forum seeks to operate the VSCs through a management committee comprising of representatives from concerned organizations' management. Women are not mentioned.

Women are main users of tubewell and primary managers of water and sanitation. It is therefore, obvious that water and sanitation technology has direct and indirect bearing on women. But the Project is silent about the issue. It notes probable multi-dimensional effect of new technology including the issue of social acceptance. However social acceptance of new technology does not necessarily indicate the acceptance by women.

Technology must take into account the fact that women have to bear and rear children, perform all domestic chores, and attend multifarious activities that put pressure their time, labour and leisure. Women therefore should have say in the choice and selection of technology.

In the proposed project, women's involvement in the whole process continues to be marginal. They have no particular role in planning, decision making and management and neither in the implementation process.

NGO Forum should carefully review the recommendations suggested and develop overall and specific gender strategies.

5. SECTOR SPECIFIC ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT

5.1 Water Supply, Site Selection

As stated in section 4.2, one of the comparative advantages of the partner NGOs is that promotion of water supply is carried out as a part of their general community oriented activities and through already existing community groups known to the partner NGOs. In this way it is possible for the partner NGOs to ensure that priority is given to the most needy groups living in underserved pockets.

The conditions for qualifying for a No. 6 or a Tara tubewell includes among others:

- DPHE: minimum 10 families with no safe public water source within a distance of minimum 400'. In densely populated areas, the distance may be reduced to 300'.
- NGO Forum: minimum 10 families (No. 6 pumps) or 15-20 families (Tara pump) with no safe public water source within a distance of 400'-500'.

The definition of an underserved pocket more or less follows the above criteria.

Logically the NGOs, targeting remote and underserved areas, have more strict criteria than DPHE. However, in order to strengthen the partner NGOs' emphasis on underserved and neglected pockets even further, the AT finds that the following criteria should be applied:

- No. 6 pumps: minimum 10 families with no safe public water source within a distance of 700'.
- Tara pumps: minimum 15-20 families with no safe public water source throughout the year within a distance of 700'.

Priority should be given to communities without a safe public source within 1000'.

The partner NGOs spend considerable time in selecting a proper site for the installation. In particular, emphasis is given to selection of a site in accordance with women's priorities and which is fully accessible to all. This will minimize the risk that a local influential person eventually de-facto may privatise the installation.

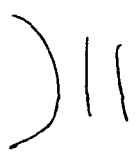
The AT appreciates the applied community mobilization procedures which should continue to be used. The Village Development Committees, mentioned in section 3.5, should not be involved in site selection, as it remains to be verified to what extent these committees may be dominated by the village leaders.

NB
Intervlocking Permanent Standing VDC
(w) Some members on a Standing NATSAN committee

APCA Sect^a



*Site select
John poverty-orientation*



5.2 Water Supply, Subsidy Issues

For the No. 6 installations, NGO Forum provides all materials for the tubewell and the pump as well as the cement for the platform within a total amount of Taka 2,500 per installation. The beneficiaries will pay, in cash or labour, for: i) carrying materials, ii) sinking of tubewell, installation of pump, and construction of platform, iii) other materials for the platform besides the cement, and iv) cost of materials exceeding Taka 2,500. This correspond to an approximate subsidy of 50%.

For the Tara pumps and other water supply technologies, the same principles apply except that there is no upper limit on the value of materials provided by NGO Forum. For these technologies, NGO Forum has calculated the subsidy to amount to approximately 75%.

In order to ensure genuine community ownership of the installation, rather than having one family dominating its future use, emphasis is placed on user contributions from all families, though not necessarily on equal terms.

5.3 Water Supply, Shallow Water Table Area

The shallow water table area is in general well served with No. 6 pumps, but the pumps are not evenly distributed. A number of community groups do not have access, or at least not full access, to a pump within a reasonable walking distance. The main reasons for this are that these community groups are remote and without financial and political influence.

In 1992, DPHE carried out a survey of underserved pockets. The validity of this survey has been checked by UNICEF and WHO. During the period 1992-96, 21,000 of these pockets were covered by the DPHE/UNICEF programme. Future DPHE/UNICEF programmes will not include water supply installations in the shallow water table area. Similarly, neither SDC nor Danida plan to continue in this area. DPHE implements programmes in the shallow water table area, but it is generally acknowledged and confirmed by different studies that such programmes are not specifically targeting the underserved and neglected communities. Political influence seems to be a determining factor when tubewells are allocated. The main reason for this being that Union Water and Sanitation Committees, often dominated by the union parishad chairmen, have the final authority to approve tubewell applications.

need stable criteria

Due to their community orientation, NGOs are in a good position to reach remote and underserved pockets.

The partner NGOs have a proven capacity to install shallow tubewells with No. 6 pumps and the applied self-help system seems to work well. In total, more than 25,000 pumps have been installed with support from NGO Forum, in addition to an unknown number financed from other sources. During 1992-95, 1,000 No. 6 installations were completed per year under the SDC/Danida funded NGO Forum programme.

In the NGO Forum proposal, the number of No. 6 installations has been reduced from the previous 1,000 installations per year to 500 installations per year in the future. The rationale for this is not clear. The partner NGOs have a proven capacity to install 1,000 pumps per year, and they have obvious comparative advantages in targeting underserved pockets. In fact they may be the only ones doing it.

5.4 Water Supply, Low Water Table Area

There is a need to provide water supply installations on a large scale in the low water table area. The coverage is far below the national average, and as a consequence of the declining water table, the low water table area will gradually cover an increasing part of rural Bangladesh.

DPHE has during recent years installed 10,000 - 15,000 Tara pumps per year, partly supported by UNICEF and partly with Government funds. UNICEF intends to continue this support, but is at present constrained by lack of funds. As described in section 3.2.1, SDC intends to concentrate its future support in the low water table area.

DPHE may in future continue to install 15,000 - 20,000 Tara pumps per year. In contrast to this, the NGO Forum proposal includes the installation of 400 pumps per year only. Thus, in terms of hardware coverage, the partner NGOs can in the short run do very little.

Based on past experience, there is a genuine risk, that a major share of the Tara pumps will be given to people with political or financial influence rather than to the most needy communities. The main reason for this being that union water and sanitation committees, often dominated by the union parishad chairmen, have the final authority to approve tubewell applications.

According to the government statutes for union water and sanitation committees, local NGOs should be represented in these committees. Thus, these NGOs can exert, though most probably limited, influence on the allocation of tubewells. It will be in full accordance with the comparative advantages of partner NGOs if the NGOs concentrate on mobilizing and supporting underserved and neglected communities in getting access to Tara pumps from the DPHE programmes rather than installing the pumps themselves. This is in particular relevant as and when SDC supports a programme in the low water table area. In such a programme, a number (e.g. 25%) of the Tara pump installations could be reserved for NGO projects in such a way that the NGOs will be responsible for community mobilization, site selection and caretaker training while the DPHE project will be responsible for hardware implementation in accordance with the procedures mutually agreed upon by SDC and DPHE.

NGO Forum and the partner NGOs have very little experience in installing Tara pumps. So far the partner NGOs have installed only 55 Tara pumps including 10 pumps financed by SDC/Danida during 1996.

Some
sublines

approach
BUT -
need bona
fide criteria

✓ good
idea

BRAC?

NGO Forum has some technicians with previous Tara pump experience. These technicians supervise the installation of Tara pumps and are responsible for the technical part of the caretaker training.

BRAC?
PROSIKA

Neither NGO Forum nor partner NGO staff appear to fully acknowledge the complexity of Tara pump installations as compared to No. 6 installations. In particular, the importance of ensuring a vertical tubewell and watertight pump rods is not widely known. Past experience with DPHE's installation of Tara pumps has clearly confirmed the dangers of installing Tara pumps through contractors and supervisory personnel without proper knowledge about such technical aspects. DPHE has recently improved its performance, among others by only using private mistries which have been certified after attending special training courses.

✓

In the longer run, donors are likely to withdraw their support to installation of Tara pumps through DPHE, hence, leaving this to the private sector. However, the poorest communities may not benefit from such a strategy and NGOs may then have to be involved in covering underserved pockets. For this reason, NGOs' capacity to install Tara pumps should be gradually built up. This could be done by NGO Forum as a pilot activity and through a limited number of selected partner NGOs. Only mistries certified by DPHE should be applied.

✓

In order to ensure proper training and support, the installation of Tara pumps should be increased gradually, rather than by installing the proposed 400 Tara pumps already during the first year. It appears better to install e.g. 100 Tara pumps during the first year and then gradually increasing the number to a total of 400 by the end of the Programme.

✓

DPHE intends to replace the previously installed non-extractable version of the Tara pump by an extractable version. This will increase the total cost of an installation by an estimated 20%, but it is likely to double the lifetime of the tubewell. The donors supporting DPHE have in principle endorsed this decision. NGO Forum should discuss this issue with DPHE and UNICEF with a view to ensure standardization of the Tara pump design.

✓

It is stated in the NGO Forum proposal that: "NGO Forum will make arrangement with the manufacturers of the Tara pump and its spare parts to make those available at least at union level. One or several shop keepers of a village market will procure those from the union level and make the spare parts or pumps available at the village level". It is difficult to see that NGO Forum has any comparative advantage in this respect, in particular, because such attempts are already being made by DPHE supported by the UNDP/World Bank Regional Water and Sanitation Group. Consequently, NGO Forum should refrain from this activity.

but
and
monitor
availability, sales
and prices (profit)
desire of vendor to
continue

5.5 Water Supply, Coastal Belt

There is a need to provide water supply installations on a large scale in the coastal belt. The coverage is far below the national average, mainly because saline intrusion necessitates installation of a mix of technologies all of which are much more complex and more costly than shallow tubewells with No. 6 pumps.

+
knowledge
of WABAN
about location
of spares + how
to get

DPHE has during recent years established more than 3,000 installations per year, supported by UNICEF and other donors. UNICEF intends to continue this support, but is at present constrained by lack of funds. As described in section 3.2.1, Danida intends to concentrate its future support in the coastal belt. Consequently, DPHE may in the future continue to establish at least 3,000 installations per year. In contrast to this, the NGO Forum proposal includes approximately 200 installations per year. Thus, in terms of hardware coverage, the partner NGOs can in the short run do very little.

For the same reasons as stated in section 5.4 above, the partner NGOs should concentrate on mobilizing and supporting underserved and neglected communities in getting access to installations from the DPHE programmes rather than making the installations themselves. Similarly, as and when Danida supports a programme in the coastal belt, a number (e.g. 25%) of the installations could be reserved for NGO projects in such a way that the NGOs will be responsible for community mobilization, site selection and caretaker training while the DPHE project will be responsible for hardware implementation in accordance with the procedures mutually agreed upon by Danida and DPHE.

NGO Forum and the partner NGOs have very little experience in installing coastal belt technologies. So far the partner NGOs have installed 20 shallow shrouded tubewells and 10 pond sand filters. Partner NGOs have not installed deep tubewells with support from NGO Forum.

NGO Forum has no technical staff with previous experience in coastal belt technologies. Selection of the most appropriate technology requires hydrogeological knowledge and data as well as special supervisory skills. It can be questioned whether the NGO Forum staff have these qualifications, while most partner NGO field staff certainly do not have the required qualifications.

Partner NGOs and NGO Forum do not appear to fully acknowledge the complexity of the proposed technologies as compared to No. 6 installations.

Though the quality of DPHE's pond sand filters is far from good, DPHE as such has considerable experience from the coastal belt. Furthermore, DPHE has hydrogeologists, a hydrogeological database and hydrogeological maps.

As compared to DPHE, partner NGOs have no comparative advantages in installing new technologies in the coastal belt, and it may be questioned whether they will be able to ensure an adequate quality of such installations. Consequently, such technologies should not be installed by partner NGOs during the proposed project phase.

5.6 Water Supply, Other Technologies

Rainwater Harvesting

In some limited areas in Bangladesh, the problem is not to provide safe drinking water but rather to provide (non-saline) water. This is the case in an area in the Coastal Belt south of Khulna and in parts of Chittagong Hill Tracts.

DPHE and UNICEF have conducted some studies on rainwater harvesting and implemented some pilot rainwater harvesting schemes. In the above mentioned areas, rainwater harvesting was found feasible. UNICEF concluded that NGOs may be in a better position than DPHE to carry out such schemes, where community motivation and management are more important than provision of hardware.

The NGO Forum proposal includes installation of 150 rainwater harvesting schemes through partner NGOs. NGO Forum has no previous experience with rainwater harvesting, and it has not operationalised its strategy for such interventions.

The AT in principle supports the NGO Forum proposal to introduce rainwater harvesting. However, this promotion should follow the findings and recommendations of the DPHE/UNICEF studies and UNICEF should be regularly consulted during implementation.

Iron Removal Plants

High iron content in the groundwater is a problem in parts of Bangladesh. The iron content is not harmful in itself, but it gives the water an unpleasant taste, which may make users revert to drinking unsafe water from other sources. Two types of iron removal plants have been installed in Bangladesh so far. The DPHE/UNICEF programme promotes one type while the DPHE/Danida project in Chaumohani and Laxmipur pourashavas promotes another type.

A recent survey by DPHE hydrogeologists supported by a short term Danida hydrogeologist, has shown that in a substantial number of cases, the iron problem can be reduced by tapping an aquifer at a different depth. Consequently, the iron problem may be less frequent in the future.

DPHE's experience with iron removal plants is very discouraging, primarily because DPHE does not pay attention to community mobilization, caretaker training and regular follow-up, all of which are vital for successful community management of such schemes.

The NGO Forum proposal includes installation of 300 iron removal plants. NGO Forum has no previous experience with such schemes. Partner NGOs may not be able to ensure construction of iron removal plants of an acceptable quality.

NGOs are likely to have the necessary community orientation for achieving sustainable use of iron removal plants. Consequently, NGO Forum should be given the opportunity on a pilot basis to introduce a limited number of such plants provided the following preconditions are fulfilled:

- the results of DPHE's mapping of iron free aquifers should be studied carefully;
- lessons learnt from the operation and maintenance of the different types of iron removal plants should be studied carefully, e.g. with assistance of the ITN centre at BUET;

- the iron removal plants should only be installed in cases where there is a genuine community demand;
- the iron removal plants should be installed through a few particularly competent partner NGOs;
- only contractors with previous experience in installing iron removal plants should be selected;
- a maximum of 100 plants should be installed;
- training of caretakers should be done as a pilot activity to be undertaken directly by NGO Forum staff on an ad-hoc basis.

Ring Wells

In parts of Chittagong Hill Tracts and some areas in northern Bangladesh along the border, ring well is the most feasible technology. These areas are often inhabited by ethnic minorities. So far, DPHE has given low priority to supplying water to the mentioned areas in northern Bangladesh. Due to the cultural differences between DPHE staff and the beneficiaries, it seems very difficult for DPHE to ensure the necessary community mobilization. Local NGOs from these areas may be in a better position to ensure such a community mobilization.

Construction of ring wells is not included in the NGO Forum proposal. Neither NGO Forum nor its partner NGOs have previous experience with ring wells. As there exist local mistries with considerable experience in well digging, this may not be a crucial problem.

In the opinion of the AT, NGO Forum should be given the opportunity on a pilot basis to construct a limited number of ring wells provided the following preconditions are fulfilled:

- the ring wells should only be installed through local partner NGOs already working in these areas;
- only contractors with previous experience in ring wells technology should be selected;
- a maximum of 100 ring wells should be installed.

Desanding or Resinking of Choked Shallow Tubewells

Even a correctly constructed tubewell is likely, sooner or later, to choke-up. In some cases, the tubewell can be desanded for less than Taka 100. In case the desanding fails, some of the pipes can be withdrawn and resunk in a new tubewell. The cost of resinking will be less than the cost of a new tubewell. Resinking of shallow tubewells is included in some of the DPHE programmes, but for some reason, this activity is not given high priority. It is

confirmed by studies that desanding is feasible, but DPHE field staff is reluctant to undertake such activities.

Partner NGOs report cases, where communities are unserved because their tubewells are choked-up. In order to promote cost efficiency and long term sustainability, NGO Forum should as a pilot activity include resinking of shallow tubewells in its programme. Resinking of 100 shallow tubewells during the first year gradually increasing to 300 tubewells during year 3 could be aimed at. NGO Forum could also on a pilot basis encourage user groups to attempt to desand their choked tubewells. Many local private tubewell mistries are familiar with these technologies.

5.7 Sanitation

5.7.1 Role of Private Producers and DPHE

The number of private latrine producers has expanded considerably during the recent years. It appears however, that this expansion has been concentrated at thana centres and at places with developed infrastructure such as along some major roads. The number of private producers may not have increased much at union headquarters level.

The interest in buying latrine components is reduced considerably if people have to transport the latrine components more than 3-4 kilometres. If transport by boat is possible, this distance is somewhat higher. Consequently, the potential for involving the private producers in sales of latrine components in remote rural areas should not be overestimated. The same applies to the DPHE sanitation centres.

Most private producers do not produce water seal latrines, which is the most appropriate type of latrine for those, who can afford it. This also reduces the role of such producers in promotion of different technological options. The same applies to DPHE's latrine production.

Neither private producers nor DPHE are providing credit. Without credit, many people cannot afford to buy a proper latrine. Though subsidized, some people are reluctant to buy latrines from DPHE due to DPHE's rather bureaucratic procedures and sometimes the extra cost involved.

According to the NGO Forum proposal, the role of private producers should be strengthened through:

- creation of favourable conditions for the private sector in underserved areas;
- training of private producers in making better quality products;
- persuasion of private producers to locate production centres at places easily accessible to consumers in the villages;

- arrangements with the manufacturers of plastic pans to make these available at least at union level;
- persuasion of private producers to increase production of different types of latrines;
- promotion and linkage of 20 private producers to produce and sell latrines at the community level on pilot basis;
- motivation of youth to establish village sanitation centres with funds from Department of Youth Development.

No operational details regarding the above strategy are given in the NGO Forum proposal.

It may be questioned whether NGO Forum and its partner NGOs have any comparative advantages for promoting the private sector. Within the private producers' potential supply area, the partner NGOs can promote the private sector as follows: i) create a demand, ii) provide credit facilities (not to be financed by NGO Forum), and iii) only install sanitation production facilities in areas with no private producers. Outside the private producers' natural supply area, the NGOs can do little to promote such producers.

Some transport question

5.7.2 Village Sanitation Centres

NGO Forum supports the establishment of partner NGO village sanitation centres by providing: i) production shed, moulds and equipment, ii) demonstration models of different types of latrines, iii) Taka 50,000 in cash as seed money for a revolving working capital fund, but not for providing credit, and iv) training. The AT finds the level of support reasonable. However, SDC states in its comments to the draft appraisal report, that SDC finds this level of support too high.

The transport of the latrine components from the village sanitation centres to the individual houses in remote locations is often a problem. It has been reported that some better-off NGOs have solved this problem by procuring a tricycle-van which is then rented to the buyers at a nominal rent. The AT finds this an interesting idea, which also can be used in connection with transport of materials for mobile production of latrine components. NGO Forum should, therefore, provide a tricycle-van to each centre to be established in the future.

The partner NGOs normally support the production by providing free land as well as administrative support, in particular with regard to accounting.

NGO Forum applies the following criteria for supporting the centres:

1. the centres must be located at least 5 kilometres from any other latrine producer;
2. each centre shall sell a minimum of 50 latrine sets per month;

3. the value of the revolving fund provided by NGO Forum must be retained, primarily by selling the latrine components at a cost 15% above the calculated production price.

At least the second criteria is not fulfilled, as the average production per centre appears to be in the order of 20-25 sets per month. Taking into consideration the location of the village sanitation centres at union headquarters, where the market potential is modest, it may not be realistic to expect a sale of 50 sets per month. In comparison, the DPHE sanitation centres at thana centres have difficulties in meeting a target of 25 sets per month. Furthermore, some centres appears to be dormant, as they have not sold any latrine sets during 1996. It has not been possible for the AT to assess to what extent the other criteria have been fulfilled. According to information from DPHE, criterion 1 is not always fulfilled.

There are indications that at least some centres use the seed money for providing credit.

Strictly speaking, the centres are not sustainable as the production is indirectly supported by NGO Forum and the partner NGOs as described above. However, provided the value of the revolving fund is maintained, the production can continue for a number of years without further support from NGO Forum and only indirect support from the partner NGOs.

There are a number of advantages linked with partner NGOs' latrine production in remote areas: i) they may often be the only ones producing in such areas, ii) they can link creation of demand with direct and immediate supply, iii) they can offer different technological options, and iv) they can link sales of latrines with credit from their own credit programmes. For these reasons, the AT in principle recommends continued support to establishment of village sanitation centres as well as relocation of existing centres in cases where private producers have emerged nearby. The AT also finds the proposed number (180 new centres and 75 relocated centres) and the level of support justified. However, SDC states in its comments to the draft appraisal report that support should only be given to NGOs giving evidence that the private sector is not willing to move in.

Has this been assessed?

However, before a final decision about whether or not to support the NGO Forum sanitation programme is taken, an independent rapid survey of the performance of the existing village sanitation centres should be carried out. Draft terms of reference for this survey are given in Annex 3.

Some partner NGOs have experience with mobile production, but the potential for this may not have been developed adequately. Mobile production and sale are mentioned in the NGO Forum proposal, but no operational details are given. The strategy for mobile production and sales should be operationalized and promoted more vigorously. The findings from the WHO study, mentioned in section 3.2.3, should be taken into consideration.

5.7.3 Technological Issues

NGO Forum will promote water seal latrines and sanplats. The latrines can be direct or off-set as well as with or without plastic pans. Sanplats and water seal latrines will be produced at the village sanitation centres. Emphasis will be given to promotion and production of water seal latrines. The AT supports this.

Some village sanitation centres have difficulties in producing correct water seal. NGO Forum's monitoring and training in this respect are inadequate.

NGO Forum will also promote home made latrines. Some partner NGOs do not promote home made latrines, as such latrines will collapse during the monsoon, and probably even earlier. Furthermore, the cleanliness of the home made slabs is not always good. UNICEF has studied different factors leading to successful promotion of home made latrines. Thus, UNICEF has prepared a map showing areas which are suitable for installation of home made latrines and areas which are less suitable due to sandy soil and very high water table. NGO Forum should discuss such issues with UNICEF and, as appropriate, modify the strategy accordingly.

See map

5.8 Training

5.8.1 General Training Needs

There is an evident need for capacity building among partner NGOs through increased training efforts. The partner NGOs give high priority to training at different levels. For the vast majority of the NGOs, water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion are considered as important, but secondary activities. They often lack the specific professional skills and field workers often feel that their general skills in communication and social mobilization could be improved.

As described in section 3.2.1, some restructuring within the water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion sector is likely to take place in the near future. The NGOs may in such a situation have to play a different, but probably more important role, in particular with regard to software activities. Under such circumstance, the best way to prepare the partner NGOs for such a new situation is to improve their capacity through basic training of as many staff members as possible.

5.8.2 Role and Capacity of NGO Forum

NGO Forum has a Training Cell with a training centre in Dhaka. The training cell has 4 human resource and 6 technical trainers.

Through its 10 regional offices, the NGO Forum maintains a close contact with the partner NGOs and is in a favourable position to assess the training needs, select the appropriate

persons for training, conduct the training and follow up on training through monitoring of the effect of the training. Furthermore, being an apex organization for partner NGOs dealing with water supply and sanitation, NGO Forum is in a favourable situation to specialize on courses of particular relevance for the sector as well as tailor-made for NGOs. To illustrate this, the NGOs will normally address the question of hygiene promotion in connection with their other health and family planning related activities. Possible training courses conducted by for example DPHE will have to approach hygiene promotion differently as DPHE is an organization with a specific sectoral mandate. Similarly, as NGOs often link promotion of latrines with credit, the NGOs can put more emphasis on promotion of water seal latrines, while DPHE have to put more emphasis on home made latrines in order to achieve wider coverage. Consequently, some DPHE/UNICEF courses may not be optimal for NGO field staff.

DPHE is in general not deemed to have courses of direct relevance for partner NGO staff, and it may be questioned whether NGO staff will be permitted to attend such courses. An exception is DPHE/UNICEF's technical training in connection with Tara pump installations. Reference is made to section 5.8.4 below.

Some major NGOs have courses for NGO field staff, but these courses are not likely to address water and sanitation aspects in a comprehensive way. However, some specialized courses conducted by major NGOs, for example in participatory monitoring and use of traditional folk media, may advantageously be attended by NGO Forum's partner NGOs.

The ITN training centre at BUET may in future conduct some training courses of relevance for NGOs. However, the ITN centre can play an important role in improving NGO Forum's in-house training capacity. Reference is made to section 5.8.3 below.

During the period 1992-94, the number of training courses conducted by NGO Forum increased from 18 courses in 1992 to 49 courses in 1994. Since then, the number of courses has been fairly constant. There is in general no reason to question NGO Forum's capacity to handle such a number of courses.

The NGO Forum proposal for 1997-99 includes a similar number of training courses, but spread over a larger number of different types of courses. The AT is convinced that NGO Forum can manage this, and even conduct a larger total volume of training if courses are concentrated on fewer types of training.

5.8.3 Use of external Consultants

NGO Forum has used external local consultants on an ad-hoc basis, for example as trainers, in cases where specialized knowledge is required.

NGO Forum does not have a strategy for systematic use of external local consultants, and seems to have relied too much on own capacity to carry out all aspects of the training process such as: i) training needs assessment, ii) design and field testing of training courses, and iii) monitoring of the effect of the training. Lack of funds for recruiting local consultants may have been a contributing factor in the past.

The AT finds that NGO Forum should increase the use of local external consultants in the future, e.g. in connection with the above mentioned tasks. The ITN Centre, about to be established, could play such a role. Alternatively, qualified staff from one of the big international NGOs, working within the sector, could be consulted.

Another area, where local consultants advantageously could be involved, is to review the existing training, including curricula, training materials and performance of trainers.

5.8.4 Assessment of the proposed Training Courses

The proposed training courses in the NGO Forum proposal are based on a participatory training needs assessment involving the partner NGOs. The proposal includes the following 23 types of training courses:

- training courses to be conducted by NGO Forum:	11 types
- refresher training courses to be conducted by NGO Forum:	8 types
- caretaker training courses to be conducted by partner NGOs:	4 types

Total:	23 types

It is seen that most basic training courses are followed by refresher courses. This emphasis on refresher training is commendable.

Though the needs assessment is appreciated, the AT is not fully convinced that the outcome of the assessment reflects the needs and priorities of the partner NGOs. The AT's own observations in the field imply that the partner NGOs' preferences are slightly different.

As stated in section 5.8.2, the scarce resources in NGO Forum could be utilized better if the number of different types of training courses would be reduced. That would even enable NGO Forum to increase its total volume of training.

The AT, therefore, finds that the number of different types of training courses should be reduced in accordance with an in-depth assessment to be carried out with assistance of local consultants.

The following are the AT's conclusions from discussions with partner NGOs in the field as well as discussions with different stakeholders. A revised training programme should be based on the needs assessment proposed above rather on the AT's conclusions given below. However, as a budget for training activities has to be prepared now, the AT has used the conclusions below for preparing the budget:

- i) training of trainers, ii) training in social mobilization for water and sanitation, and iii) training in community participation and management of water and sanitation programmes is among the most needed courses. The AT's observations

from the field imply, that the present, and proposed, duration of the courses may not be adequate. The number of each type of courses should be increased considerably.

- Training in low-cost latrine production and village sanitation accounts management may be carried out as proposed provided the village sanitation survey, proposed in section 5.7.2, and the training needs assessment, mentioned in sections 5.8.2 and 5.8.3 confirm the need for such training. Otherwise this training should be replaced by a larger number of training of trainers courses.
- Training on e.g. popular folk media and participatory monitoring may be referred to possible existing courses conducted by some big NGOs.
- Training in connection with shallow shrouded tubewells and pond sand filters should not be conducted, as these technologies are not to be implemented by the Programme.
- Training on tubewell sinking may not be required, as this technology is widely known throughout Bangladesh within the private sector. Furthermore, the 1995 external review team found that villagers trained in tubewell sinking did: i) seldom made use of their skills, and ii) did not profit from the training commercially.
- Training on Tara pump sinking may be referred to DPHE/UNICEF which are already carrying out such courses.

5.8.5 Decentralization of Training

Apart from the training in low-cost latrine production and village sanitation accounts management, all courses recommended by the AT are planned to be carried out at the NGO Forum training centre in Dhaka.

In the opinion of the AT, some of the training courses could advantageously be carried out at regional level. Several large NGOs have training facilities at regional level or even below.

In particular training courses addressing partner NGO medium level and field staff, out of which many are women, should preferably be held locally, as it may be easier for women to attend such courses if they do not have to travel to Dhaka. Furthermore, they may benefit more from interacting with NGO staff from the same region than with staff from other parts of Bangladesh, where the problems may be different.

The AT will refrain from giving definite recommendations with regard to decentralization of parts of the training. This aspect should be dealt with in connection with the training needs assessment proposed in section 5.8.4.

5.8.6 Caretaker Training

In general the AT has no remarks to the way caretaker training is carried out. Consequently, the caretaker training may be carried out as proposed.

The NGO Forum proposal states that NGO Forum will take lessons from the UNDP/World Bank, Handpump Training and Monitoring Project implemented through DPHE in the Rajshahi area. The AT supports this. NGO Forum should revise its caretaker strategy in the light of the outcome of this project and in collaboration with relevant project staff.

5.8.7 Training Materials

There are a number of training modules on both software and hardware. These modules have to be reviewed by an external expert in relation to the quality and level of the trainees, the duration of the training, practical applicability of the lessons and effective presentation of the course content.

5.9 Communication Materials

5.9.1 Comparative Advantages of NGO Forum

Communication materials are designed and produced as main tools for facilitating all the software services like training, promotional activities and information dissemination. The materials are distributed among the respective target audiences and direct users like community people, teachers, school students, Imams, local leaders, non-school going girls, NGO workers etc.

NGO Forum has set up a Development Communication Cell for overall management of communication material. In the process of development of material the cell undertakes need assessment with the partner NGOs and audience analysis with target group people. In this exercise NGO Forum has the advantage of being close to the community. NGO Forum has worked closely with the partners for needs assessment and has undertaken audience analysis through focus group discussions at grassroots level. This feed back on the proposed design gives NGO Forum comparative advantage in development of communication materials.

5.9.2 Capacity of NGO Forum

The communication materials proposed to be developed include 13 different categories, namely, training manuals, brochure, calendar, monthly newsletter, poster, leaflet, sticker, flip-chart, booklet, school routine, billboard, tin sticker, award and greeting cards. In most of the categories, different types of material are produced for different groups.

The types of materials as proposed to be produced are too many. A proposal to reduce the number of different types of materials is given in the Project Document. Whether NGO Forum will be able to achieve its goal in communication will depend on its expertise to maintain reasonable quality of the materials in view of the large volume.

As regards production of quality materials specialized expertise in communication is essential especially in view of the diversity of the materials. NGO Forum has comparative limitation in technical expertise for designing & production of communication material compared to large NGOs and specialized agencies like advertising companies.

The volume of communication material proposed appears to be disproportionate to the existing capacity of the NGO Forum and is constrained by the limited scope of upgrading the expertise. Undertaking too many activities is likely to affect the quality of performance. NGO Forum is advised to concentrate on fewer categories of communication materials which are most needed and important for promotional activities. In selecting the materials to be retained, NGO Forum may give priority to those which are more effective in interpersonal communications.

5.9.3 Relevance/Appropriateness of Communication Materials

Development communication activities are designed for conscientization of the target audience. NGO Forum aims at creating awareness and enthusiasm in the communities about water and sanitation and a deeper understanding among people regarding value of safe water, sanitation and good hygiene practices through dissemination of messages and information. Messages formulated are based on need assessment and audience analysis and on the whole are in accordance with the prevailing situation and practices concerning water and sanitation. The messages are directed towards:

- benefit from use of safe water and hygienic latrines;
- risks associated with use of polluted water, unhygienic defecation practices, and inadequate personal hygiene.

The messages are compiled in easily legible pictorial books which are simple and appropriate.

In some cases, there are minor gaps and inconsistencies between the pictures and the worded messages. However some of these gaps could be overcome by adequate interpersonal communication. For example, flip-chart directing personal cleanliness & health education could include basic information like number of diarrhoeal death every year. This kind of information will be useful for the field workers whose knowledge is very limited and needs to be sharpened by information repeated to them. There is a need to review the materials every second year and make necessary adjustment or improvement.

5.9.4 Gender Perspectives

Gender bias has been manifested in communication materials. In visual presentations traditional role and image of women are highlighted and many pictures show women fetching water, cleaning toilets, washing utensils, cooking food, taking children to toilet while men are either eating or washing themselves. However, in one case women are pictured as tubewell mechanics (No. 6 tubewell repair & maintenance guide), another slide has a picture of men & women working together on ring slab construction. But on the whole, communication materials reinforce gender role of women.

In discussion with project personnel, they expressed preference for working within the perspective of the existing social values. However the expression social value is often misleading because there are values which support gender bias against women. But the project personnel are supposed to work towards gender equality. Moreover, during interaction with different categories of people at the field no grievance was reported about visual presentation that seek to show gender balance.

NGO Forum should reorient the understanding of its workers and personnel about the relative role of men and women in water and sanitation.

5.9.5 Communication Materials and Promotional Activities

Communication materials are mostly used for promotional activities among the community in general and the target group in particular. Impact of communication materials to a great extent depends on the effective dissemination of messages contained in the materials. Communication materials were found to be in limited dissemination. Many sessions like courtyard meetings are conducted without proper use of materials. Women attending courtyard meetings expressed desire to have posters and stickers around the venue.

Communication materials like poster, stickers have not been as widely dispersed as a social movement would require. NGO Forum explains that due to printing constraints circulation remained limited. Moreover, only communication materials will not help: interpersonal communication should follow the presentation of material.

5.9.6 Coordination with other Stakeholders and Private Agencies

NGO Forum maintains linkage with other stakeholders especially DPHE, UNICEF, World Bank and WHO. In development communication, UNICEF is the main ally. NGO Forum holds consultation with UNICEF in designing training packages and other materials. In the process of production, NGO Forum holds consultation meeting with UNICEF, DPHE and other NGO experts in communication. They also involve outside organizations to undertake the pretesting of the materials. A number of flip-charts, posters and leaflets have been produced through a collaboration between NGO Forum, UNICEF and DPHE.

There is a need to broaden and strengthen such collaboration efforts. Other NGOs are working on hygiene promotion and they also disseminate messages. Coordination, therefore, has to be strengthened in order to avoid duplication and draw on the experience of each other.

Though the achievements of NGO Forum with regard to producing communication materials to other agencies is acknowledged, NGO Forum is not an expert in communication. Advertising firms are the experts in this line. There may be a few large NGOs with similar expertise. They specialize in different types of communication tools. NGO Forum may discuss its needs with some of the leading advertising agencies or NGOs and explore the ways and means of involving them in designing communication materials. In contrast to some big NGOs, advertising agencies may not know water and sanitation issues and methodology. NGO Forum has to provide them with the necessary specifications. In this context continuous interaction is essential.

In its interaction with other NGOs, NGO Forum sometimes earn an income by supplying communication materials to other NGOs and by providing training to employees of other NGOs on request.

5.10 Promotional Activities and Information Dissemination

5.10.1 Strategy and Approach

Promotional activities are undertaken for effecting behaviour change at the community level. The activities aim at varying audiences ranging from partners to the general community and consist of production and distribution of effective communication materials, conduct of interpersonal communication and use of mass media channels.

The activities are designed to be implemented through community approach. The strategy is to reach the entire community through different target groups especially identified for the purpose and also beyond the group members.

The strategy to operate through the NGOs at grassroots level has the potential of contributing to the promotion of water and sanitation messages. NGO Forum has several comparative advantages in carrying out promotional activities. In the first place, it uses trans-sectoral approach. Secondly, it emphasises software and aims at changing community attitude through social mobilisation. On the other hand, NGO Forum is constrained by its limited specialisation about mass communication and deficiency in national level planning.

Though the Programme lays stress on addressing the whole community instead of the specific community groups of partner NGOs, the focus continues to be on the groups. Partner NGOs normally work through their groups. In views of the limited capability of the partner NGOs, the Programme should concentrate on target group approach. Working beyond the group and among the whole community is to some extent covered by the courtyard meetings and local discussion fora.

5.10.2 Extent of Activities and Need for Prioritization

Promotional activities proposed to be undertaken are too many. A proposal to reduce the number of different types of promotional activities is given in the Project Document. Performance of too many activities are constrained by time factor and human resources. Moreover partners who are to carry out the activities have other programmes too. Water and sanitation is only one component of their activities. In order to produce effective results activities should be reduced but performed more intensively and in more a integrated manner. So NGO Forum should prioritise its activities and concentrate on those which are more important and where they can make more impact. For example, school programme, Imam and youth training should have low priority, because programme for these audiences are also run by Government and other NGOs. Miking or rallies have little direct and enduring impact. Since all partners receive similar training from NGO Forum, little can be achieved through interaction among them. Exchange visits will, therefore be mere repetition of the training lessons. However, Village Development Committees have a role in the implementation of the activities. Orientation of the members of the Village Development Committees will contribute towards the monitoring of the progress of the activities. Activities, therefore should be designed accordingly.

5.10.3 Partner NGO's Capacity

Programme activities are designed to be carried out by the partner NGOs. The rationale is that the partners have the advantage to reach and influence the people at grassroots level. NGO Forum as the apex body will coordinate and facilitate the process and transfer its capability to the partners. NGO Forum is supposed to be a catalyst and not an implementor itself.

For the partner NGOs, water and sanitation is one component in their programmes and many of them are not fully involved as NGO Forum takes the main initiative and acts in some areas which should be the domain of the partners. In some cases courtyard and other sessions are conducted by NGO Forum staff. In such cases partners have not yet taken the full responsibility of field operations. To the extent NGO Forum itself takes the initiative, growth of initiative among the partners is stifled. It is essential that NGO Forum fully entrusts partners with field activities within a specific time period and work closely with them to transfer the capability to them.

5.10.4 Gender Perspectives

At present, promotional activities do not include gender issue as a priority area. Communication materials that are used to promote community awareness manifest gender bias. In the sessions of courtyard meeting, school forum, non-school girls orientation, Local Discussion Fora, Village Development Committee meetings attended by the AT, speakers were found silent about gender issues and never addressed the basic questions about women's role in water and sanitation and their involvement in the programme, such as women's burden of

work in water and sanitation and the need to reduce the burden, the need to strengthen women's participation in decision making and the need to ensure women's access to resources and ownership.

In fact, NGO Forum has not yet set its goal and strategy about gender. Partner NGOs do not treat gender as a priority issue. Obviously, gender awareness has not been translated into gender sensitivity at field level. Field operation remained gender neutral.

5.10.5 Impact on Beneficiaries

So far no impact analysis has been undertaken. However, the Monitoring Report on Software Activities (NGO Forum, May 1996) concluded that significant changes were observed in hygiene behaviour and sanitation, but the changes fall far short of the goals. Probable reasons identified were lack of adequate awareness of proper sanitation and hygiene practices and weakness in motivational activities.

The AT attended several sessions, e.g. courtyard meetings, non-school going girls orientation and observed similar scenarios. Members present in courtyard meetings were found more knowledgeable about hygiene practices compared to women not covered by programme. But it transpired that messages delivered were not adequately assimilated by many of those present. In case of non-school going girls orientation most of the meetings are one-way communication, those present are mostly listeners and not participants. Interpersonal communication is weak and messages are in many cases not received properly. Moreover, most of the sessions are not structured as a regular feature. Messages delivered once a while are likely to be easily forgotten, where as a message repeated in several sessions at regular intervals will have greater receptivity than a single administration. Promotional activities should, therefore, be more intensive and repetitive.

Messages explain the merits and advantages of good sanitary and safe water practices, but do not dispel existing values about traditional practices. For example there is a cultural belief that pond water is more suitable for quality cooking and making food more tasty. Messages urging tubewell water for all purposes will not have desirable impact unless the cultural beliefs are also handled in appropriate messages.

The proposed media and channels seem to be appropriate for the grassroots and are acceptable to the community.

Different communication media have their effectiveness. But impact will be more enduring if the messages are followed up by interpersonal communication. Interpersonal communication should be strengthened. As regards interpersonal communication some partners have introduced folk drama which have direct appeal to the rural audience. Both communication media and interpersonal communication will be blended if folk drama is staged and played by the community people themselves.

5.11 Advocacy and Information Services

Under advocacy and information services NGO Forum has proposed a number of activities some of which are new (Ad-hoc Alliance, advocacy with legislative, (In)formal Network, Information Bank).

The advocacy packages include more than ten activities which are also somehow duplication. For example open discussion with partner NGOs, local government, school teachers is duplication of Local Discussion Forum. It is debatable if NGO Forum should individually approach legislature. Advocacy with legislative could be a joint effort with the stakeholders. Collaboration with mass media through field visit is not clear. Advocacy with legislature, mass media traces the range of activities of the programme too far. Water and Sanitation Fairs as well as Water and Sanitation NGO Conventions are too defused and too superficial mechanisms to arouse and hold peoples' interest. The Programme should concentrate on activities which will produce direct effect. It is, therefore, suggested that the Programme should strengthen existing advocacy service rather than proliferative.

It is too early to set-up an information bank. NGO Forum's limited expertise and capabilities should be better devoted to reaching the target groups.

Other activities mentioned under information services are already part of the promotional activities (video film, radio spots, folk song, brochure).

There is already a Bangla newsletter. This can easily cover the relevant persons and organizations connected with water and sanitation. NGO Forum proposes to distribute an English newsletter to policy making persons, government and others who could be reached with the Bangla newsletter. In view of the Bangla newsletter, an English newsletter will have a very limited circulation and it will only be a duplication of effort.

Success stories and the pocket book will possibly have very little impact on implementation of the Programme. Target groups will have very little use of the pocket book. In view of its existing capacity and limited expertise, NGO Forum should set a realistic priority and strategy. Ancillary services may be considered after the primary objectives are effectively fulfilled. It is premature to indulge activities, such as ad-hoc alliances, (in)formal network, legislature, water and sanitation fairs, water and sanitation NGO conventions, quarterly newsletter (English), pocket book, success stories.

6. ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT

6.1 Partner NGOs

At present, NGO Forum documents mention that it works directly with over 560 partners comprising of CBOs, local NGOs (working in 10 thanas or less), national level NGOs, and several international NGOs. The actual number of partner organizations is 513, i.e. less than 560 as each branch of the same NGO is counted as one partner. In terms of representation, 79% of all NGOs working within the water and sanitation sector are partner NGOs of NGO Forum. Thus it can be seen that NGO Forum network encompasses a large majority of all related development organizations in the country.

Performance data relating to the SDC/Danida supported bridging period July 1995-June 1996, indicate that support to 40 village sanitation centres were divided as 23 for national NGOs and 17 for local NGOs/CBOs. With regard to water supply installations, 3 were carried out by a national NGO and 37 by local NGOs/CBOs. In terms of software support, a total of 26 training courses were conducted for 537 participants from 409 partner organizations, of which 26 were national NGOs while 383 were local NGOs/CBOs. The NGO Forum Proposal states that small (local) NGOs and CBOs will get the highest priority in terms of hardware support. Big (national) NGOs will primarily benefit from software support. This also seems to be the case at present.

All partners receive support from NGO Forum in terms of training, participation in workshops and promotional materials. In addition, most partners are involved in organizing local level activities such as school programmes.

During visits to selected regional offices, the partner NGOs as well as NGO Forum field staff confirmed that there was no discrimination against local NGOs/CBOs in favour of support given to national NGOs. The field staff also mentioned that at their level, there was good and mutually beneficial coordination with the other actors represented in their region, such as DPHE and UNICEF. However, in case of partner organizations, there was a lack of coordination with the union water and sanitation committees with regard to allocation of tubewells for the most needy.

There is currently no representation of small, local level NGOs or CBOs in the membership of the Forum's governance structure, viz., the General Committee and the elected Executive Committee. Several of the national partner NGOs are members of the governance structure although this has not resulted in any bias against the local NGO/CBO partners.

6.2 Organizational Policy

In early 1996, NGO Forum prepared a document titled "Component-wise Policy" that elaborates the organization's policy objectives and strategies in terms of training, promotional activities, development communication, information processing and dissemination, research, monitoring and evaluation, sanitation promotion, and water supply. This document forms the Forum's policy guideline for the next 5 years.

NGO Forum has made arrangements to engage 2 local consultants to assist the organization in preparing a long term Strategic/Perspective Plan by December 1996. Such strategic planning should include the NGO Forum's future role as a welfare or development organization, prospects for sustainability (technical, institutional, socio-economic, environmental and financial), conduit for government resources, etc.

Following a Planning Workshop held in July 1996, several policy documents, on e.g. gender policy, staff development policy, recruitment policy, etc., have been prepared in a participatory way through different working committees. However, these documents need to be thoroughly revised in a professional manner and to incorporate aspects such as gender. At present, in-house capacity to do such work is not adequate.

NGO Forum should revise the policy documents already drafted drawing on expertise available within the NGOs represented on the Executive Committee. Subsequent drafts need to be discussed internally and revised accordingly.

It is important to realize that the NGO Forum proposal needs to fit into NGO Forum's long term strategy, although the sequence has been somewhat changed in the sense that the NGO Forum proposal has been prepared before the long term strategy.

6.3 Institutional Framework

6.3.1 Organizational Development

Activities completed so far include:

- a one day planning workshop (with an external facilitator) in April 1996 that only developed a problem tree for the organization. It was noted that: i) NGO Forum was not as effective as it could be, ii) there were insufficient numbers of skilled personnel, and iii) staff development was inadequate;
- a series of sessions on self evaluation techniques has been conducted by SDC's in house advisor. The sessions were found to be useful by the staff;
- an eight day planning workshop with an external facilitator in July 1996 developed a separate Organizational Development Plan and a Project Plan. Several of the activities listed in the Organizational Development Plan have been initiated and draft policy/plan documents have been prepared.

The NGO Forum Proposal emphasizes that one of the main thrusts of NGO Forum's organizational development will be to build its apex image through the establishment of a strong network with all actors in the water and sanitation sector. Besides formulating an organizational policy, NGO Forum will also enhance the management skills of its personnel through staff development, self evaluation, job analysis, and improve information flow within the organization.

The AT finds that there is a need for building on understanding, starting from the highest levels of management, that organizational development is a planned, participatory process that leads to improvement in performance capacity of the organization as well as enhances individual development. Such a process should not begin with looking at the internal functioning of the organization itself. The initial focus should be on overall management issues that are a reflection of performance.

It is suggested by the AT that NGO Forum prepares a clear plan to go through the sequential process, starting to look first at the broader management issues, i.e. tasks and performance, then looking at which partners and other organizations it cooperates with in order to achieve its identified tasks. Next is the analysis of personnel available for the tasks to know whether they have the necessary capabilities, and finally, looking at the internal structures and processes, followed by adapting to the necessary changes and restructuring.

Though premature, it may be suggested that the organizational development process could first complete the planning of activities with corresponding indicators, time frame and responsibilities including monitoring and reporting. Other issues could be to look at the organizational capacity to perform the required tasks, internal structures and procedures, team building to work on micro issues, suggest changes including restructuring etc.

NGO Forum should include within its Proposal, the budget for availing services of organizational development experts who could facilitate the process and encourage changes from within NGO Forum itself.

6.3.2 Membership and Governance Structure

Unlike many other network NGOs, the organization has a small general membership comprising of 16 persons who constitute the General Committee. Five of these are women. The general members are drawn from among the large national NGO leaders, former NGO senior officials, academics, donor agencies, and government officials, though the constitution debars government officials from becoming members of the General Committee. The General Committee members elect a Chairperson.

Purposely, NGO Forum was not established as a membership organization such as ADAB, where all supported organizations are members. In the past, large membership organizations have often resulted in dilution of focus, conflicting views among members, ineffective management, etc.

The governing board (the Executive Committee) comprises of 8 members of which 4 are women. 7 members are elected from among and by the General Committee members. The Director is an ex-officio member and secretary to the Executive Committee. The Chairperson of the General Committee is also the Chairperson of the Executive Committee. As in case of many other NGOs, the Executive Committee selects General Committee members and this has not created any problems in the past.

The Executive Committee normally meets 4 to 5 times a year and alternate meetings are joint meetings with the members of the General Committee. The Executive Committee plays a policy guiding role and approves major expenditures such as purchase of own office building. Recent Executive Committee meetings have also discussed issues such as performance reports, budget, audit, evaluation, cheque signatory, selection of new members of General Committee, project proposal, recruitment, etc. There has been reported several important decisions regarding promotion and recruitment that were not discussed at Executive Committee meetings.

The attendance at the two most recent Executive Committee meetings has been 63% while at the last Annual General Meeting it was 56%. Such low attendance could be the result of having almost exclusively 'high profile' members.

The General Committee should have more members (say up to 20) and more women representatives to provide a better leverage and balance at the Annual General Meetings. The members could be selected from among the active local NGO partners. Future members of both the General Committee and the Executive Committee should be selected on the basis that they are available to participate in the scheduled meetings. The Executive Committee should ensure that the NGO Forum management presents all important information for discussion and review, prior to taking decisions and implementing.

6.3.3 Organizational Set-up

In general, the organizational structure is flat and does not show a clustering of similar tasks under a manageable number of divisions. The Director's span of supervision extends to as many as 8 persons although in reality, it has been observed that there is frequent two way direct (from and to Director) communication across organizational levels. Informal and easy access is fine for NGOs, but the frequency in NGO Forum leaves little time for the Director to perform more serious management tasks.

There is a need for a more formal management team comprising of senior staff who could participate equally (with the Director) in decision making and management. Recently, a system of weekly management review meetings has been introduced with representation from all administration and all functional cells. The discussions of such meetings are minuted on a rotational basis by the participants.

Certain functions could be clustered such as: i) training, information, development communication, ii) field operations, technical (engineering), and iii) finance, administration, personnel, logistics; each having a team leader reporting to the Director. Functions such as internal audit, monitoring and evaluation could be within the Director's supervision. A formal management team with clearly established responsibilities and tasks should be set up comprising of the Director and the three division team leaders as suggested above. At least one such team leader should be a woman.

6.3.4 Decentralization to and Strengthening of Regional Offices

With regard to the issue of decentralization between the national and field level structures, there are insufficient authority given to the regional offices in terms of budget, cheque signing, etc.

With regard to the strength of the regional offices, there is inadequate technical and physical capacity in relation to the large number of partners linked to each regional office. Currently, the range is from a low 29 in the recently established office at Sylhet to a high 86 at Jessore.

The Project Proposal has included the opening of 2 new regional offices at Bogra and Khulna, and this will support the decentralization process, provided that the NGO Forum management gives more authority to the regional offices. SDC states in its comments to the draft appraisal report that SDC does not support this expansion.

The regional offices need to be strengthened in terms of being able to organize local training programmes away from Dhaka, having more staff for implementation, follow up activities, monitoring, more opportunities for training, and logistic support such as computer, motor cycles, etc.

6.4 Staffing Issues

6.4.1 Size and Distribution

The current staff strength of NGO Forum is 131 persons comprising of 84 positions at the head office and 47 at the ten regional offices. Among the 3 on-going projects, the one supported by SDC/Danida pays for 95 persons while the CAFOD/MISEREOR supported project pays for 23 and the MISEREOR supported project pays for 13 persons.

The Administration section led by the Director includes the accounts personnel. All staff is based at the head office in Dhaka.

Among the functional cells, the largest is Field Operations led by the newly appointed Field Coordinator. Field Operations include staff at the regional offices. The typical staffing at a regional office consists of 1 Regional Officer, 1 Assistant Regional Officer, 1 Programme Organizer, 1 Office Assistant and 1 Caretaker.

The other functional cells: Training, Advocacy and Information, Development Communication, and Research, Monitoring & Evaluation are all based at the head office.

The staff strength in the NGO Forum Proposal is higher than that existing strength under the SDC/Danida supported project. However, considering the whole organization, there will be little change even with the addition of the proposed 2 new regional offices, and support staff for some of the functional cells, viz., Advocacy & Information, Development Communication, and Research, Monitoring & Evaluation.

The budget in the NGO Forum Proposal has considered reasonable cushion in anticipation of a salary review and the likelihood of new management function(s) for women. Based on such budgetary limitation, NGO Forum should conduct a detailed analysis of tasks, personnel required vis a vis personnel available. NGO Forum can then adjust its staff strength (considering training, job rotation, job enrichment, early retirement, use of outside consultants, recruitment, etc.).

6.4.2 Professional Capacity of NGO Forum

In order to assess the professional capacity of the NGO Forum staff, the AT has reviewed the record of past performance of various activities. In terms of implementation achievement, it can be seen that there is no trend or cycle over the past five years, possibly corresponding to the varying levels of donor funding. However, the number of staff has substantially increased, and the NGO Forum Proposal has asked for more.

Annex 4 provides a summary of the performance/achievements of software and hardware activities over the period 1991-96. Targets for 1996 and the NGO Forum Proposal period 1997-1999 (revised after the AT's comments) have also been indicated. The other information at the end of the table are staff strength, regional offices, budget, grants received and expenditure, own income, on going projects, partner NGOs, etc. It can be seen from the annexed table that the AT suggested activities during the Project period 1997-99, include mostly those for which NGO Forum already has the capacity and experience, including adjusting or modifying the design of past activities, such as school programme. In addition, there are some activities that are new, such as introduction of a new technology, rain water harvesting.

As can be seen in the following sections, the professional capacity is inadequate with respect to the managerial and implementation skills that are necessary for an apex organization. There are many employees that do not have the professional competence that is needed for the specific job that he/she performs.

6.4.3 Staff Development

The organization's Annual Reports provide information on staff development training and it can be seen that including mostly in country training and a few training abroad, there were 12 such opportunities in 1993, 15 in 1994, and 12 in 1995. In the absence of a comprehensive training plan, most of the above mentioned opportunities were availed on an ad hoc basis, i.e. responding to announcements or invitation for nominations. Several short trips abroad undertaken in the past to attend international conferences, workshops and seminars may not have resulted in benefits to the organization as a whole.

The current staff qualifications of professionals are more of a general nature (MA, MSS, MSc, BA, etc.) and only the accounting and technical personnel at the head office have specific professional background. There are no staff having qualifications in business

administration, development management, etc. Therefore, it is necessary to prepare a need based training plan as well as other forms of staff development such as job enrichment, job rotation, transfer, attachment/secondment, etc.

Following the recent development of a draft Staff Development Policy, a Standing Committee comprising of all the Administration and functional cell chiefs, has been formed. This Committee has already initiated a process of participatory staff development training needs assessment through the use of a questionnaire.

Staff development training will comprise of in house training, in country training, and training abroad. As many as 21 training subject matter/topics have been mentioned in the NGO Forum Proposal. However, there are no mention of gender awareness or sensitization training. Preference should be given to in-country training. Formal feedback after completion of training should be stressed.

6.4.4 Salaries, Recruitment and Promotion

Staff turnover has been relatively low, although the salary levels are below average, considering that NGO Forum is a network organization. The salary structure currently in place is comparable to those of other leading national NGOs.

The Service Rule introduced in July 1992 needs to be reviewed along with a salary review last amended in July 1994. A review will ensure that the salary and other benefits are attractive to retain as well as attract qualified staff. Issues such as minimum salaries, comparable cash and non cash benefits, salary differentials among grades, fairness, inflation, etc., could be covered by such a review. For example, the amounts of daily allowance paid to staff on field trips is too low in comparison to what it actually costs a staff for his/her accommodation and food.

With a view to address the important issue of gender balance within the organization, time bound targets should be set for recruiting more women. In particular more women should be recruited at the management level and at the regional level (Regional Officers, Assistant Regional Officers and Programme Organizers). To recruit women in low ranking and office based positions, such as Office Assistants, is of secondary importance.

6.5 Planning, Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

6.5.1 Planning

NGO Forum promotes participatory planning through annual needs assessment sessions involving partner NGOs at the regional level. In addition, each regional office organizes several local discussion fora attended by partners, community representatives, local government officials, etc.

The NGO Forum Proposal does not fully reflect the outcome of above participatory planning. The Proposal has no work plan that shows the various activities, indicators, time frame, etc. The Project Document prepared jointly by NGO Forum and the AT contains an overall plan of implementation.

Project implementation design allows for a current participatory detailed planning involving partner NGOs/CBOs, community leaders, beneficiaries, specially women.

NGO Forum should prepare detailed annual work plans that would serve as an implementation as well as monitoring tool. Such work plans should take into consideration the overall plan of implementation given in the Project Document.

6.5.2 Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

Monitoring is the routine collection, analysis, and use of information about how well the Project is going. The purposes of monitoring are to: i) help staff and partners make decisions to improve the Project, ii) allow management to assess what effect or impact the Project is having on partners, and iii) ensure accountability to all stakeholders (partners, staff, management, donors, government, communities) with regard to the Project's outcome.

On the other hand, impact evaluation is a periodic evaluation of the Project's effectiveness. Such an evaluation measures the extent to which objectives have been accomplished and what these accomplishments mean to partners and communities.

Therefore, monitoring and evaluation are not distinct operations although there are differences among the two. Monitoring provides information for day-to-day management and for impact assessment. In case of impact evaluation, the results will be more accurate and revealing when they draw on information that has been routinely and objectively collected over the life of the Programme.

A monitoring system can be considered as one which will monitor progress (how well the Project is going) as well as measure impact (how to do it better).

With regard to monitoring and reporting, presently too much information is collected and documented. The tasks of preparing progress reports, annual reports, etc., are divided among the various functional cells, and often as an additional job. The information is not presented in summarized, easily understandable form, so that management may not be able to use the information for corrective and timely decision making. Currently, there is no internal culture of routinely using monitoring information for decision making at different levels. Special mention needs to be made that gender aspects have not been specifically considered in the design of the current monitoring and reporting systems.

NGO Forum needs to develop simple monitoring and reporting formats in a participatory way involving the head office management, regional office staff, partner, donor, etc. It will also be necessary to revise these on a regular basis.

As an example, the existing system could be revised by first looking at the key questions that NGO Forum must answer for its stakeholders, followed by identifying simple economic, social, organizational development indicators and tools to collect information. Then it will be necessary to decide on what information will be collected at what frequency, who will write it, and to whom it will be distributed. The information will be presented both qualitatively (quotes, meeting summaries, etc.) as well as quantitatively (analyzed and using statistical average, percentage, etc.).

Special studies will be conducted on selected topics such as how the programme quality can be improved in relation to hygiene behavior through assessment of Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) of the community.

Monitoring effect and impact should be done by outside consultants and not the project implementors. Also, monitoring should not be used to provide information to serve the donors' requirements only.

The NGO Forum proposal mentions that the regional offices will submit quarterly progress reports to the head office. Mid year review meetings will be held at the head office to assess the overall progress and make adjustments where necessary. Year end meetings will be held to review achievements and discuss policy and strategy issues.

Regular reports should contain short, factual, descriptive but summarized information on planned and actual activities including planned changes and motives, bottlenecks and changes during implementation. The reporting should also cover organizational changes and development including staff training, external environment, etc. The results of internal evaluations, workshops, partner meetings, etc. are also to be reported. The financial report will cover expenditures per budget item, activity, sub-programme, etc. Finally, the forthcoming activities, changes or adjustments to original workplan and related budget are to be included in the report.

A mid term review will be conducted by external consultants appointed by the donors. The Terms of Reference for the review will be drafted by the donors in consultation with NGO Forum.

7. FINANCIAL ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT

7.1 Funding Pattern

NGO Forum has been receiving assistance from foreign donors for implementation of its programmes. These donors include CAFOD, MISEREOR, SDC, Danida, OXFAM and UNICEF. The amounts received from individual donors over the last six years are shown below in Taka (1 USD = 42 Taka):

Name of Donor	1991 Taka	1992 Taka	1993 Taka	1994 Taka	1995 Taka	1996 (6 months) Taka	TOTAL Taka
MISEREOR	10,245,072	16,157,080	4,285,623	7,291,620	4,216,176	1,075,154	43,270,725
CAFOD	5,858,637	4,775,984	4,737,577	6,397,195	4,800,352	3,093,054	29,662,799
World Bank	124,000	0	0	0	0	0	124,000
UNDP	280,000	0	0	0	0	0	280,000
Australian H.C.	872,701	0	0	0	0	0	872,701
SDC	0	4,500,000	8,041,586	6,633,379	10,820,981	5,588,860	35,584,806
DANIDA	0	7,000,000	4,031,612	3,000,000	5,935,567	4,525,000	24,492,179
OXFAM - UK	0	1,597,853	696,140	0	0	0	2,293,993
UNICEF	0	975,000	3,297,832	4,575,833	4,215,296	0	13,063,961
PACT - USA	0	475,000	300,564	0	0	0	775,564
	17,380,410	35,480,917	25,390,934	27,898,027	29,988,372	14,282,068	150,420,728

MISEREOR has committed funds up to end June 1997. Apart from this, no funds have been committed by donors for 1997 and onwards.

The NGO Forum Proposal for the joint SDC/DANIDA funded "Integrated Water and Sanitation Programme through Partner Organizations", with a proposed budget of Taka 137.81 million covers the period January 1997 to December 1999. NGO Forum had earlier implemented a joint SDC/DANIDA programme from July 1992 to June 1995, with a budget of Taka 40.74 million. An external review of the project recommended a 12 month bridging phase beginning July 1995, later extended to 18 months, with a budget of Taka 24.0 million.

7.2 Assessment of Financial Procedures

7.2.1 Internal Control Environment

General

The management of NGO Forum is responsible for establishing and maintaining an adequate internal control structure. The objectives of an internal control structure are to provide management with reasonable, but not absolute, assurance that assets are safeguarded against loss from unauthorized use or disposition, and that transactions are executed in accordance with management's authorization and recorded properly to permit the preparation of Financial Statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a consistent basis.

The AT has conducted a review of NGO-Forum's financial control and accounting system, as well as the overall control environment which covered fund receipts and disbursements, payroll, accounting system, fixed assets management, reporting and auditing. Results of the examination are given below.

Staffing

The Accounts Department in the Head Office is headed by a Senior Accounts Officer, who is a qualified Cost and Management Accountant, and has more than 14 years experience in the NGO sector. He is assisted by a team of four accounting staff who also have an accounting background. At field level, Office Assistants, often without accounting background, are responsible for recording and reporting of financial transactions. In order to supplement the skills of the accounting staff, particularly those in the field, regular and refresher training courses should be carried out at periodic intervals.

Accounting System

Accounts of NGO Forum are maintained on an accrual basis. A 5 digit chart of accounts is prepared for each approved project, where the first 2 digits represent the project identification number and the last 3 digits represent the project expenditure identification number. Debit/credit vouchers are prepared using the above code numbers which are then entered in the cash book and posted to respective ledgers through journal vouchers.

Although the above procedures and other controls are followed in practice, a documented Accounting Manual has not yet been introduced. The donors, particularly DANIDA, have certain requirements concerning accounting procedures, which are outlined in DANIDA's Guidelines on Decentralized Project Accounting. As required by these guidelines, a Project Accounts Manual is required to be in place, covering the following areas:

- The Accounting System
 - * Technical Set-up
 - * Security Procedures
 - * Filing

- Accounting Procedures and Reporting
 - * Responsibilities
 - * Transfer of Funds from DANIDA
 - * Cash Handling
 - * Daily Accounts Procedure
 - * Monthly Procedures and Reporting

- Other Systems and Procedures
 - * Purchasing
 - * Stores System
 - * Transport System
 - * Payroll System
 - * Monitoring System
 - * Assets Register

7.2.2 Budget Planning and Management

The process of budget planning and preparation at NGO FORUM commences with a Participatory Workshop comprising representatives from the Regional Offices and the Head Office. This workshop develops a project plan, based on objectives and programme activities. A Working Cell comprising heads of the various cells then works out the detailed implications including the financial aspects.

An Inter-Cell meeting is then held in which the time frame and financial outlays are set. The senior management then reviews and finalizes the budget with inputs from the Accounts Department.

Each Regional Office is given a copy of the Activity plan which lists the major programme activities, e.g. hardware and software (symposium, workshops, etc.). Each activity has a unit cost, based on which the Head Office sends funds to the Regional Offices. With regard to operational expenses, no budget incorporating financial information, is sent to the Regional Offices. File records show that an expenditure ceiling amount is sent for utility, telephone, etc. line items, but the last such communication was made in 1994/95, prior to the bridging phase.

7.2.3 Financial Reporting

Financial Reporting takes several forms. At the lowest level, the Regional Offices send monthly information to the Head Office, which then compiles this information together with Head Office expenditure data. A quarterly summary statement showing budget and actual figures is sent to the donors. Bi-annual and annual audited accounts are also sent to the donors, in accordance with the provisions of the agreement.

7.2.4 Internal Audit

At present, there is a one-man Internal Audit Department, who reports to the Senior Accounts Officer, instead of reporting directly to the Director. There is an internal audit guideline, but this does not contain the auditor's duties and scope of work. A comprehensive Internal Audit Manual outlining duties, scope of work, level of coverage, etc. should be drawn up in consultation with the donors, as required by the DANIDA Guidelines on accounting and auditing.

The AT has noted that the Internal Auditor could not visit all regions at least twice a year as required by the audit guideline. In many cases the AT noted the auditor had not visited some regions even once during 1996, although 9 months have elapsed. Internal audit visits conducted during 1995-96 are given below:

Regions	1995		1996
	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June
	Audit period covered	Audit period covered	Audit period covered
Rangpur	14 to 20.02.95	25 to 29.11.95	-
Mymensingh	01 to 06.04.95	29.10.95 to 02.11.95	-
Chittagong	17 to 23.04.95	28 to 31.08.95	26 to 30.08.96
Jessore	-	20 to 25.09.95	-
Barisal	-	03 to 08.05.95	-
Dhaka	-	27.04.95 to 02.05.95	-
Rajshahi	12 to 17.03.95	20 to 24.11.95	-
Sylhet	-	-	1 to 05.09.96
Faridpur	-	29.01.95 to 04.02.95	-
Comilla	-	15 to 20.01.95	14 to 19.09.96

In order to ensure adequate internal audit coverage to all the Regional Offices as well as the Head Office, the Internal Audit Department should be strengthened by employing at least one more internal auditor.

7.3 Assessment of Budget and Project Proposal

7.3.1 NGO Forum Own Income Potential

The audit reports for the last two financial years, i.e. 1994 and 1995, show that the NGO Forum income originates from the following sources:

SOURCE	1994	1995
Donors	93%	93%
Interest income	2%	1%
Income from own sources	5%	6%
TOTAL	100%	100%

Note: Interest income represents bank interest received on account of unutilized donor funds being kept in an interest bearing account, while income from own sources represents income from NGO Forum's own activities which are not directly dependent on donor support.

Most NGOs in Bangladesh are entirely dependent on external funds and are, therefore often limited in the scope of their activities by the reality of donor priorities and the availability of funds. This does also apply to NGO Forum, which will only exist as long as donors find it a useful umbrella organization for the NGOs involved in water supply and sanitation. SDC states, however, in its comments to the draft appraisal report that NGO Forum should strive for, and develop a minimum of financial autonomy.

Financial self-sufficiency can in principle be achieved through:

- income through sale of the NGOs services;
- income from secondary activities (distinct from the NGOs primary activities);
- local fund raising from wealthy individuals, firms or funds.

NGO Forum's potential for raising funds from such other sources than donors is deemed to be very modest. To the extent, NGO Forum has its own income, this income should primarily be used to consolidate NGO Forum rather than being used as counterpart funds.

7.3.2 Cost Sharing within SDC/Danida Project

The budget included in the NGO Forum proposal does only cover the proposed SDC/Danida contributions to the Project while the inputs from NGO Forum, the partner NGOs and the beneficiaries have not been mentioned. The contributions from NGO Forum, the partner NGOs and the beneficiaries are difficult to quantify in financial terms. However, the main inputs are as follows:

- NGO Forum: house rent for main building, office equipment, logistics etc. In addition to these, NGO Forum considers the network of partner NGOs and the services of the Executive Committee as NGO Forum inputs to the Project.
- Partner NGOs: management, staff, offices, logistics.
- Beneficiaries: i) 50% of the cost tubewells with No. 6 pumps and 25% of the cost for other types of water supply installations, ii) the entire cost for latrines, and iii) all maintenance and repair cost.

The AT finds this level of cost sharing reasonable. As compared to Government programmes, the level of subsidy in the NGO Forum programme is less.

7.3.3 Cost Sharing between SDC and Danida

For the 1992-95 project phase, SDC contributed 60% of the approved programme costs while Danida contributed 40%. The same cost sharing ratio was applied during the bridging phase from July 1995 to December 1996.

The budget in the NGO Forum Proposal for 1997-99 has been prepared according to geophysical areas. Thus a budget has been prepared for the low water table area and another for the coastal belt plus the shallow water table area. Costs which can not directly be linked to a specific area, have in the NGO Forum draft budget proposal been divided in the ratio 60% for the low water table area and 40% for the remaining areas. This is done in accordance with indications from the two donors that SDC is interested to fund activities in the low water table area and that Danida is interested to fund activities in the coastal belt and the low water table area.

In the revised budget prepared jointly by NGO Forum and the AT, the following cost sharing has been applied.

- all costs, which can be directly related to a specific area, such as Tara pump installations to the low water table area, have been included in the budget for this area;
- all costs, which can not be directly linked to a specific area, such as production of promotional materials, have been sub-divided in accordance with the geographic size of the different areas. In the future, the low water table area is expected to cover 40% of Bangladesh, while the coastal belt and the shallow water table area together will cover 60%.

7.3.4 Cost Sharing with possible other Donors

The NGO Forum Proposal does not mention the cost sharing issue. Instead, it has allocated all costs to the Programme, on the assumption that only the SDC/Danida programme will be implemented. The only exception is the salaries to the Director and two other senior personnel where only 80% of the salaries have been included in the budget.

In a multi donor funding environment and with a multi-programme portfolio, the question of identification and financing of expenses, which cannot be related to a specific programme, assumes great importance. A number of functions will be common for different donor funded projects such as head office administration, running of regional offices and preparation of communication materials. SDC and Danida may be the only donors supporting NGO Forum. In that case, all common expenses will have to be borne by SDC and Danida. However, if NGO Forum also gets support from other donors, a cost sharing arrangement has to be worked out.

In the opinion of the AT, such a cost sharing arrangement has to be agreed upon prior to SDC and Danida signing agreements with NGO Forum. The following two principles can be applied:

1. the contributions from SDC and Danida to common expenses remain fixed, and any extra cost for common activities will be borne by possible other donors. From an administrative point, this option is the most simple;
2. all donors supporting NGO Forum share the common expenses in relation to their total contribution to NGO Forum. This option reflects better the real cost of the different projects, but it may not be so easy to administer.

The first of the above two principles seems to be the most operational.

7.3.5 Fulfillment of Donor Requirements with regard to Handling of Funds, Financial Reporting and Auditing

Handling of Funds

The Project Agreement for the earlier phases contained specific instructions on custody of donor funds, e.g. use of a separate bank account, refund of interests, etc. Moreover, Danida Guidelines on project accounting and practice followed by other Danida funded projects require such projects to operate on the basis of specially designated bank accounts which may not be used for receiving/paying income and expenses for other programmes. NGO Forum practice to date has not been in compliance with these instructions. Although there is no reference in NGO Forum's Proposal of this point, it should be ensured that handling of donor funds is done in accordance with donor requirements.

Financial Reporting

Although not clearly mentioned in NGO Forum's Proposal, NGO Forum has been complying with the required provisions relating to financial reporting to both SDC and Danida. This is expected to continue without any major problems.

External Auditing

At present NGO Forum uses the same external auditor to audit the total annual accounts as well as the accounts of the donors. For audit of donor funds, Terms of Reference and the name of the auditor are sent to the donors for approval. Appointment is made by NGO Forum.

Danida Guidelines on Decentralized Project Accounting and current practice clearly require that the external auditor be appointed by Danida. Costs for the audit may be paid by Danida, but can then be charged to the project budget. Moreover, the Terms of Reference, drawn up by NGO Forum and approved by the donors, for the external audit exercise, do not comply with the Danida requirements in this regard.