Facilitating Community Water Supply
From transferring filtration technology to multi-stakeholder learning

What does it take to bring safe sustainable water supplies to the hundreds of thousands of communities in the developing world who desperately need them? According to Jan Teun Visscher, author of this publication, an important part of the answer is FLAIR.

Facilitating of Learning, Application, Implementation and Reflection is a comprehensive approach to community-based water supply programmes that has evolved from a generation of technology-transfer, community-participation and learning-project paradigms. Jan Teun Visscher traces the history of these forerunners to FLAIR through three decades of research, demonstration, participatory development, catalytic support and long-term monitoring/evaluation.

The bases for his analysis are two long-running IRC R&D programmes: The Slow-Sand Filtration (SSF) project which ran from 1975 to 1986; and the TRANSCOL project, which focused on Multi-Stage Filtration (MSF) and lasted from 1989 to 1996. Visscher revisited a number of MSF plants in Colombia, Bolivia and Ecuador in 2005 to supplement the many reports, evaluations and published papers that, along with his own close association with the two projects, provided the evidence for his proposal of the FLAIR approach.

Facilitating Community Water Supply documents failures as well as successes. The two projects have spanned a period of significant evolution in community water supply approaches and the experiences with SSF and MSF provide fascinating insights into that evolutionary process. Cross-references to approaches in the agriculture sector add value to historic perspective. The author’s conclusion is that “facilitation” should not stop, as it tends to do now, once communities and service providers have been helped through the processes of technology selection and project implementation. The specialized form of facilitation that has developed through learning projects needs to carry on through operation and maintenance, extension, replication and system development. That has implications for governments, donor agencies, NGOs and, importantly, universities in both developed and developing countries, whose task will be to equip their graduates with the necessary FLAIR.
Facilitating Community Water Supply

*From transferring filtration technology to multi-stakeholder learning*

Jan Teun Visscher

IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre
Delft, the Netherlands
2006

Abstract

What does it take to bring safe sustainable water supplies to the hundreds of thousands of communities in the developing world who desperately need them? According to Jan Teun Visscher, author of this publication, an important part of the answer is FLAIR. Facilitating of Learning, Action, Implementation and Reflection is a comprehensive approach to community-based water supply programmes that has evolved from a generation of technology-transfer, community-participation and learning-project paradigms. Jan Teun Visscher traces the history of these forerunners to FLAIR through three decades of research, demonstration, participatory development, catalytic support and long-term monitoring/evaluation. The bases for his analysis are two long-running IRC R&D programmes: The Slow-Sand Filtration (SSF) project which ran from 1975 to 1986; and the TRANSCOL project, which focused on Multi-Stage Filtration (MSF) and lasted from 1989 to 1996. Visscher revisited a number of MSF plants in Colombia, Bolivia and Ecuador in 2005 to supplement the many reports, evaluations and published papers that, along with his own close association with the two projects, provided the evidence for his proposal of the FLAIR approach.

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