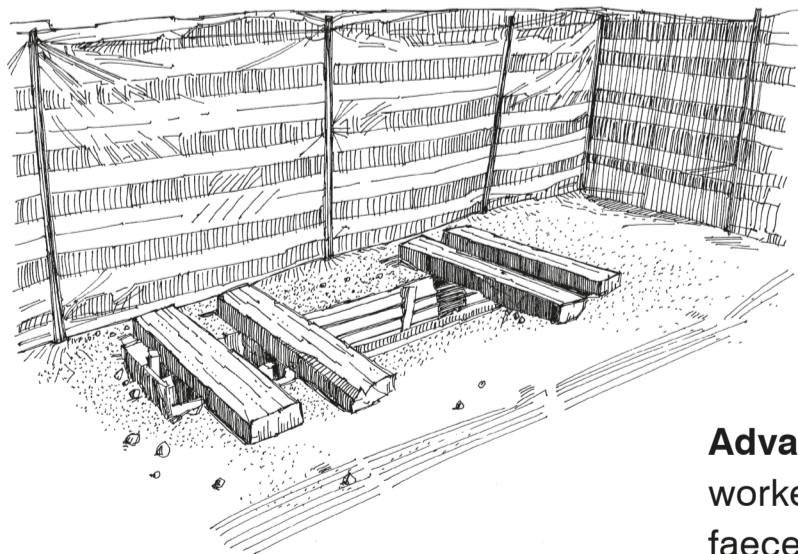
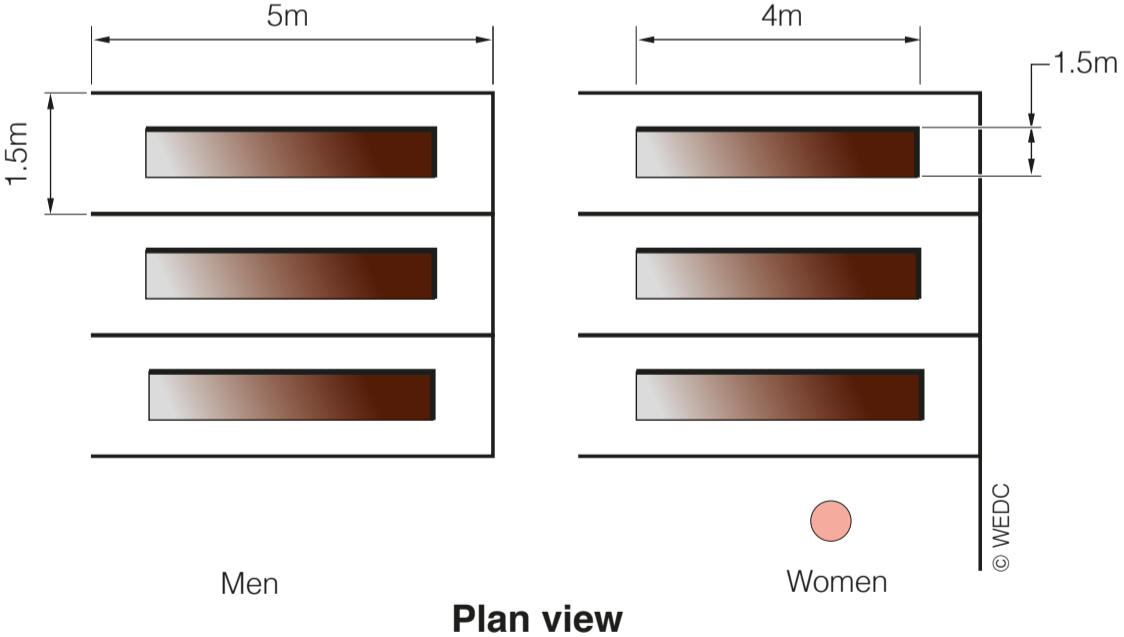
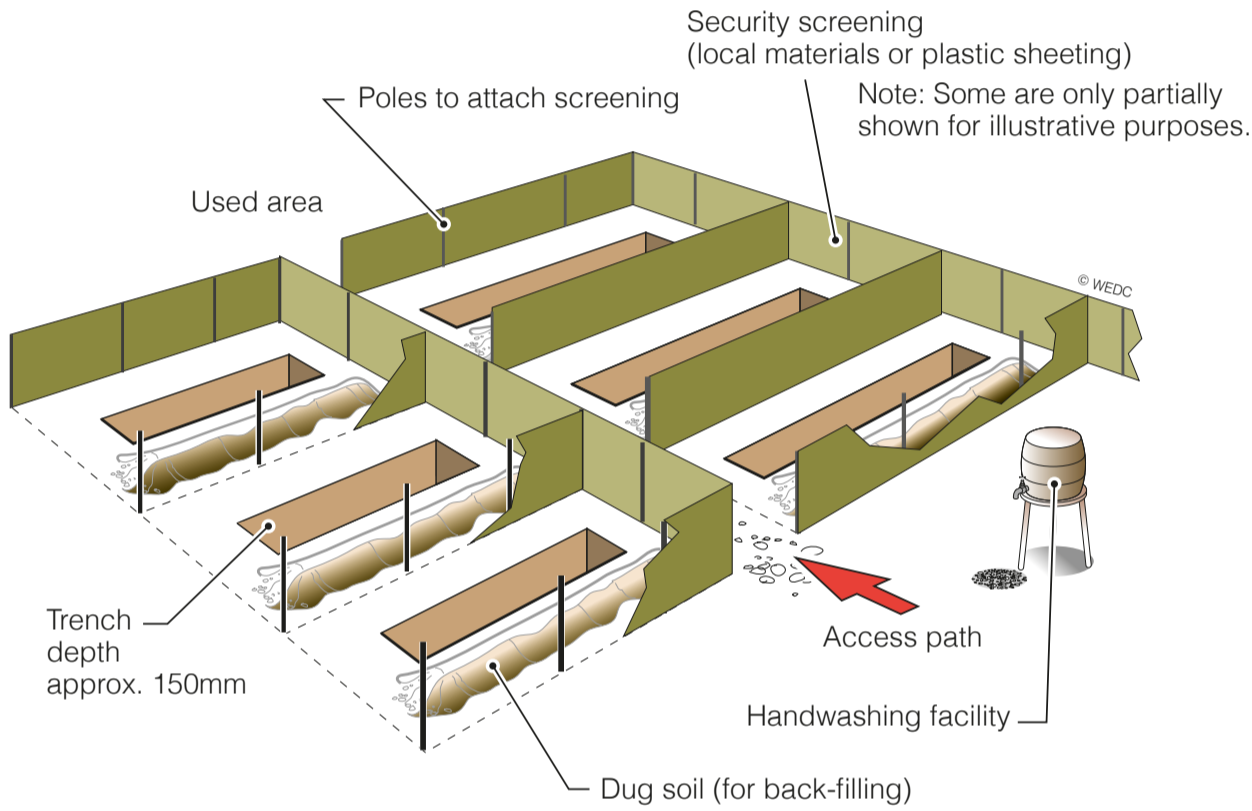


Shallow trench latrines in emergencies

A simple improvement to open defecation fields is to provide shallow trenches in which people can defecate. This allows users to cover faeces and improves the overall hygiene and convenience of an open defecation system. Trenches need only be 200-300mm wide and 150mm deep, and shovels may be provided to allow each user to cover their excreta with soil.

What to do

Divide the field into 1.5m wide strips with access paths. Make sure strips furthest from the entrance are used first. When the bottom layer of a section of trench is fully covered with excreta it is filled in. Only short lengths of trench should be opened for use at any one time to encourage the full utilization of the trench but it may be appropriate to have a number of trenches open at the same time. A simple rule is to allow 0.25m² of land per person per day. This means 2,500m² per 10,000 people per day, or nearly two hectares per week. Areas for men and women should always be separated. Where possible, make the plastic sheeting or bamboo-mat walls higher than a standing person to ensure complete privacy.



Advantages: Rapid to implement (one worker can dig 50m of trench per day); faeces can be covered easily with soil.

Constraints: Limited privacy; short life-span; considerable space required.

Source: HARVEY, P. A. 2007. *Excreta Disposal in Emergencies: A field manual*. Loughborough, UK: WEDC, Loughborough University