Violence, Gender and WASH: A Practitioner’s Toolkit

Making water, sanitation and hygiene safer through improved programming and services

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What we did

Investigated scope and scale of violence related to WASH & good practices - through desk review and consultations

Meetings with protection & WASH stakeholders in Liberia, learning in Afghanistan, consultations in UK and by email & SKYPE

Established what would be most useful for WASH practitioners

Formulation of toolkit – core briefing notes, checklists, toolsets (case studies, videos, training scenarios etc)

Over 70 contributors - 32 of whom also reviewed parts of the toolkit – backgrounds in protection, gender, GBV/VAW, clinical psychology, health, law & WASH
What we learnt

• Violence including GBV is widespread & implications are huge
• Whilst poor access to WASH is not the root cause of violence, it can increase vulnerabilities to violence

Categories of violence with relevance to WASH

A - Sexual violence
(Rape, assault, molestation, inappropriate touching)

B - Psychological violence
(Harassment, 'eve-baiting', bullying or causing fear, stress or shame)

C - Physical violence
(Beating, fighting leading to injury, death)

D - Socio-cultural violence
(Social ostracism, discrimination, political marginalisation, social norms with negative impacts)

Children beaten by adults when collecting water

Rape or harassment when practicing open defecation, using public services and collecting water

Exclusion of vulnerable/marginalised groups from services or harassment when using services

Domestic violence over water use in the household
What we learnt

• Violence related to WASH occurring across development & humanitarian contexts, urban & rural

• Examples - WASH and protection specialists working closer together – WASH staff channel for information dissemination on services for GBV

• Examples - adolescent girls being involved in safety audits in urban and refugee camp situations (research)

• Women staff facing harassment, bullying, undermining in the workplace – believed to be greatly under-estimated

• More guidance materials available for use in humanitarian contexts (IASC), little in development contexts

• Training needed for staff on their responsibilities, to know what to do and where to go if they face violence at community level in their programmes or against colleagues
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**Briefing Note 1 - About this toolkit and how to use it**
- Purpose, scope and limitations
- Contents
- Definitions
- Acknowledgements

**Briefing Note 2 - Improving WASH programming**
- Why as WASH practitioners we should consider vulnerabilities to violence
- What violence can look like in relation to WASH
- Principles for good practice in reducing violence related to WASH
- Examples of good practice in improving programming
- Advocacy and awareness raising

**Briefing Note 3 – Institutional commitment and staff capacity**
- How violence can affect us as WASH professionals
- What we need to know as WASH professionals
- Responsibilities of WASH sector organisations - policies, codes of conduct, training and support for staff, finance and M&E
- Examples of institutional good practice
- Identifies what we should do if we or our colleagues are affected directly by violence - Do’s and Don’ts

**Briefing Note 4 – Understanding the protection sector & how to respond to violence as a WASH actor**
- Describes the actors who work in the ‘Protection’ sector in development and humanitarian contexts
- Provides examples of how WASH and Protection actors have worked together
- Describes referral systems and ethics used by the protection sector
- Identifies what we should do if faced with violence in communities – Do’s and Don’ts

**Checklist of actions**
- 10 key principles
- Actions with the potential to reduce violence
- Links to further information in the toolkit

**Toolset 1 – Case studies**
Examples of violence, gender and WASH

**Toolset 2 – Videos**
Violence, gender and WASH & good practice in programming - including the video ‘As safe as toilets?’

**Toolset 3 – Case studies**
Good practice in policy & programming

**Toolset 4 – Methodologies for working with communities**

**Toolset 5 – Scenarios**
For use in training

**Toolset 6 – Marginalised and vulnerable groups**

**Toolset 7 – International legal instruments**
Relevant clauses

**Supporting documents**
Lessons for DFID and practitioners

• Highly supportive of DFID making VAW a ministerial priority

• As a sector we typically justify investment in WASH policy and programmes principally through benefits to women and girls - but benefits reduced if we don’t programme in a safe way

• As a WASH sector we need to take vulnerabilities to violence more seriously - scale is greater than previously considered

• Need specific and targeted action - mainstreaming gender alone is not enough. Parallels to climate-proofing & DRR - how do we mainstream principles?

• The development WASH sector in particular to learn how to better apply these principles and collaborate more effectively with/learn from others

• Increase monitoring of safety related to WASH programmes - encourage learning, documentation and sharing on what works
DFID must continue to lead the way on this vital issue

Drawings in this presentation by: Matthew Fryer, University of Winchester